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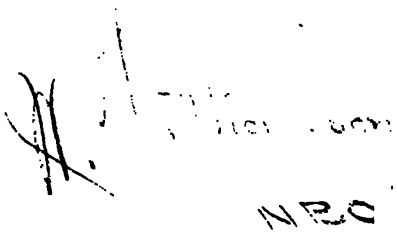

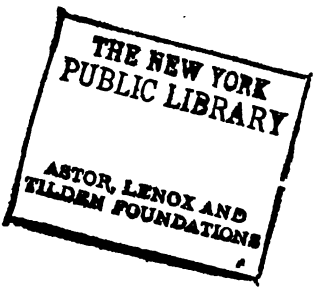
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" But there was no bounds to the tumult when Joe, throwing his head between the Doctor's legs, raised him off the ground."

THE CHRONICLES OF PINEVILLE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"MAJOR JONES'S COURTSHIP."

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EMBRACING

SKETCHES

OF

GEORGIA SCENES, INCIDENTS, AND CHARACTERS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"MAJOR JONES'S COURTSHIP."

i.e. William Tappan Thompson

WITH TWELVE ORIGINAL ENGRAVINGS BY DARLEY.

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TO

EBENEZER STARNES, ESQ.,

OF AUGUSTA, GA.,

WITH SENTIMENTS OF SINCERE GRATITUDE AND ESTEEM,

This Volume

IS RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED

BY

THE AUTHOR.

PREFACE.

ENCOURAGED by the favour with which a recent humble attempt to depict some of the peculiar features of the Georgia backwoodsman has been received by the public, some of my friends have persuaded me to publish a few other stories illustrative of similar character, which they knew I had written. Influenced by these persuasions, I determined to brush up my old manuscripts, produce something new of the same sort, and thus endeavour to present to the public a few more interesting specimens of the genus "*Cracker.*"

I wish it to be understood that I use this term with all due respect. It belongs to a class of good people with whom it has been my destiny to become intimately associated, and I know that there is much to admire and respect in their characters. The lineaments of these characters are strongly marked, and they sit so fair, that he who takes rough sketches, as I sometimes do, can readily "take their

picters;" but as a class they are brave, generous, honest, and industrious, and withal, possessed of a sturdy patriotism. The vagabond and the dissolute among them are only the exceptions to the rule, and in a few generations more, education will have made the mass a great people. When such education will have done all it is destined to effect for the American backwoodsman, it may, and will increase the sum of his happiness and usefulness in the scale of being, but it will at the same time, by polishing away those peculiarities which now mark his manners and language, reduce him to the common level of commonplace people, and make him a less curious "specimen" for the study of the naturalist. As he now is, however, I have endeavoured, in a small way, to catch his "manners living as they rise," and if I have been so fortunate as to succeed, the effort will amuse him, when he meets with it, if it should interest no one else.

I claim no higher character for my stories—some of which have appeared in a literary periodical of limited circulation—than that of mere sketches, designed to amuse those who have a taste for such

things, with some slight traits of peculiar character; and it may be to afford the student of human nature a glance at characters not often found in books, or anywhere else, indeed, except in just such places as "*Pineville*," Georgia. Should they thus add any thing to the stock of man's innocent amusement, or his knowledge, so as to make him for a moment either happier or better, it will be a rich reward for

THE AUTHOR.

Augusta, Ga., Nov. 1844.

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CHRONICLES OF PINEVILLE.

GREAT ATTRACTION!

OR

THE DOCTOR MOST OUDACIOUSLY TUCK IN.

A SKETCH FROM REAL LIFE.

"Oh, Jim, the great attraction's come to town!" gasped a little fellow to his friend, as he was hastening home to impart the glad tidings to his family.

"The which?" inquired Jim, turning suddenly round; his eyes, mouth, and every feature expressive of the liveliest curiosity.

Jim's informant had "no time to tarrey" for a more particular explanation, but hurried on, leaving the latter to infer that something extraordinary was to pay, from some broken sentences which he uttered about "show—down to Capt. Brown's Tavern—big picters—Dr. Jones," &c.,—which could not be distinctly heard at so great and rapidly increasing distance. But Jim did hear "show—Capt. Brown's tavern," and he had a clue to the matter.

Away dashed Jim—and when he arrived at the aforesaid tavern, he beheld a crowd of gazing men and boys gathered in the bar-room. looking with all

their might at a large poster, at the head of which stood these magic words:

GREAT ATTRACTION!!

FOR TWO NIGHTS ONLY!!!

All was wonderment and curiosity, and Jim for once experienced the inadequacy of the human capacity for such extraordinary occasions—he could not make out the "printin'" himself—and his mind was totally incapable of taking in and making use of half he heard. "What upon yeath is it?" he asked of the nearest. One said it was the "great attraction from New York"—another that it was the Fourth of July on horseback—some one else that it was "all sorts of a thing," and his curiosity was rather increased than diminished when Dr. Jones, who chanced to be there, volunteered to read it all off to the crowd, if they would only keep silence. Then there was a Babel of voices calling silence for several minutes.

"Silence! till the doctor reads it," shouted one.

"Silence, fellers, silence!" bawled another.

"Shet your mouth, Bill Parker, no body can't hear nothin' for you."

"Silence! silence!" repeated a dozen at a time.

When they had become somewhat quiet, the doctor mounted a chair, and, after running the thing over for a minute or two, during which the faces of his audience indicated the strongest symptoms of insupportable suspense, he read out in a full round tone, and right off without spelling a word, the whole bill, from "Great Attraction," to "performances to commence at half-past seven, precisely."

"He read out in a full round tone, and right off without spelling a word, the whole bill, from 'Great Attraction,' to 'performances to commence at half-past seven, precisely.'"

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After which, with a patronising air peculiarly his own, he condescended to explain the matter to his eager listeners. He told them that it was a thing called a circus, derived from circle for horses to run round in—that it was a very wonderful thing—that circus-men were the "most surprisen'est creatures" he had ever met with anywhere—that he had "seed" a great many of them in Augusta, when he was at college, and knew all about them—that they could ride the swiftest horses without saddle or bridle, on their heads—could dance on wires and ropes, could jump to all creation, could eat fire, swallow broad-swords, and perform all manner of antics. Many questions were pressed in regard to the show, to all of which the doctor made the most satisfactory answers, as one perfectly familiar with such things, and the crowd dispersed to await the advent of this, to them, eighth wonder of the world.

But we left Thomas Stullings on his way home to announce the arrival of the show to the Stullings family, who, we should not forget to inform the reader, were people of consequence in Pineville. Widow Stullings was rich—owned a fine plantation and lots of negroes—a circumstance which doubtless enhanced the estimation in which her three amiable daughters were held by the village beaux.

"Oh, mother! guess what's come to town!" exclaimed Thomas, as he dashed his hat into one chair and threw himself into another, almost fainting for want of breath.

"I don't know, Tommy," replied the old lady, raising her eyes from her sewing until she caught a

view of his flushed face, and observed his deep respiration. "Why, Laws-a-massy! what ails the child? Is the Ingins ris again?" she asked, dropping her work and rising from her seat.

"No, mother," replied Tommy, as soon as he could command sufficient breath, "but something else."

By this time the whole household were attracted by Thomas's strange manner.

"What is it, then, Thomas?" demanded two or three at the same time.

"A great attraction—a circus!"

"A what?"

"A circus, Dr. Jones says—a whole heap of circus riders."

"Oh, la! is that all?—why child your uncle Moses was a circuit-rider, on the Green Meadow circuit, for upwards of five years, until he went to live in the Hogtown settlement, where he died, poor ——"

"Oh, no, mother, uncle Moses couldn't ride on his head, and swallow broad-swords, could he?"

"Why, Thomas, you must be crazy! who ever heard of sich a thing as preachers riding on their heads, and ——"

"Ha, ha," shouted Tommy, "these aint preachers, mother, they're show-folks; Dr. Jones says so."

Little could be gathered from what Thomas had to communicate. The old lady was sorely puzzled, but the young ladies had learned enough to excite their curiosity beyond the point of endurance; so it was determined to despatch Thomas to request Dr. Jones to call over and tell them all about it, as they

were quite sure he was perfectly conversant with the whole matter. Accordingly the doctor was sent for, and for once in his life his treatment proved successful. He soon relieved the fit of curiosity into which Thomas's news had thrown them, by relating all the information which his travels, as well as his close intimacy with the bill-poster of the company, who had just arrived in town, enabled him to glean.

Doctor Peter Jones should be formally introduced to the reader as the most important personage who figures in our sketch. He was a well grown young man, rather tall, with light gray eyes, abundantly large for the ordinary purposes of that organ, whitish eyebrows, and hair rather inclined to sorrel. There were no particular indications of uncommon talent in his countenance, and from a rather imperfect knowledge of his developments, we should say that, in his case, phrenology and physiognomy agreed. Nevertheless the doctor was a firm believer in the first of these sciences, in consequence of which he was in the habit of cutting away his locks about his forehead and temples, in order to acquit himself of "a forehead villanously low."

The doctor was not yet in possession of a sheepskin license to practise the healing art, nor were the public much indebted to him for the exercise of his medical skill, though he had been known to pull a tooth or so, and on one occasion was supposed to have saved the life of a negro who had been kicked by a wayward mule, by a resort to his favourite remedy *phlebotomy*. He had attended one course of lectures at Augusta, and returned to his native

village, rich in all the polish and refinement which a winter's residence in that Philadelphia of the south affords such ample opportunities for acquiring. Such had been his improvement in point of deportment, dress, and conversation, that his former acquaintances would scarcely have recognised him in his new guise, had they met him anywhere else than at home. He no longer tolerated Kentucky-jeans and thick-soled shoes, but a graceful, shining blue cloth coat of the latest cut, pants to match, and a pair of stilt-heeled boots, with a black velvet cap, which sat jauntily on the top of his head, the visor almost concealing his eyes, a walking-cane of the most delicate polish, and, of nights or rainy days, a professional looking camblet wrapper, constituted his usual costume. All these little advantages conspired to give the doctor undisputed precedence in the estimation of the young ladies, a fact of which he was not a little vain, and adding to it the reputation he had acquired for smartness, which is so generally conceded to students, whether of medicine or other professions, the doctor could not but feel himself, to use one of his own polished expressions —"bully of the tan-yard."

As leading characters generally direct public opinion in all matters of propriety, fashion, &c., the stand which the doctor had taken in relation to the circus, now for the first time introduced into the village, was calculated to make it exceedingly popular, and, of course, vastly to benefit the little troop of equestrians, who had resorted to the expedient of travelling, to avoid the heavy expenses of

wintering in the large cities of the North. The doctor obtained from the avant-courier of the company a few small bills, which he industriously circulated among the ladies of his acquaintance, who had almost unanimously resolved to attend, and the whole village gave "note of dreadful preparation" for the coming fête.

Before night a light wagon, drawn by two spotted horses, drove up to the tavern. In an hour all Pineville was rife with rumours,—each had made some discovery, and each had some marvel to relate—few slept that night, and by ten o'clock the next morning the news had spread far and wide into the surrounding country that a great show was to come off in town that evening. During the day the balance of the company arrived, and long before night the canvass pavilion was reared. Blasts of the French horn, and scrapings of fiddle-strings, might be heard within, while the doctor and some two or three smart negroes belonging to the hotel, the only ones who had free ingress, might be seen passing in and out; which circumstance greatly excited the envy of the little boys, who all seemed to have business on this particular occasion in the neighbourhood of Captain Brown's back lot. The doctor had given them all the information which such interesting strangers usually require about saw-dust, tan-bark, and the like, and every thing was progressing finely, as the shades of evening drew on. He announced in a confidential manner to the manager, the extent to which his personal influence had been exerted, and concluded, as he left the pavilion, by

assuring that gentleman that he might expect a perfect "*jam*," a technical term upon which he placed considerable emphasis.

It was night. As if Christmas, New Year, and the Fourth of July had all come together—had all been concentrated into one glorious holiday—the people, town and country, white and black, old and young, came trooping towards the enclosure, which was now brilliantly lighted up, and from which burst a loud peal of music, such as never had been heard before in Pineville. The effect was electric; none within hearing of that "sonorous metal blowing martial sounds," could resist its thrilling appeals. Those who had thrown the half dollar in the scale against the show and found the latter "wanting," now felt their pockets kick the beam, and resolved to "go it any how."

The negroes were frantic,—the older ones might be seen in all directions giving way to the impulse in the most "highly concentrated" double shuffles, while the little niggerlings sprang into the air, clapped their hands, shouted, or lay down and rolled in an agony of delight. Troops were pressing to the yet unopened entrance, when suddenly a loud report was heard, and a brilliant skyrocket shot far up into the star-lit heavens, burst in air, and came showering down in innumerable coruscant stars of variegated fire. This marvellous phenomenon was hailed with screams from the more timid sex, rather coarser ejaculations of surprise from the men, and shouts from the boys and negroes. But the sensation which it had produced was suddenly

interrupted by the opening of the doors of the show. And then there was such a rush, such a scrambling to be first, and such a changing of money!

Of course the doctor was on the spot, but he had been to Augusta and knew a thing or two about circuses. He had purchased his tickets during the day, and now stood with an air of exclusive complacency, a little back from the throng, smiling at the eagerness of the uninitiated crowd, occasionally assuring the anxious bevy of pretty girls under his care, that they need not be alarmed, as he had taken the precaution to secure their seats, which, he said, was the universal custom in Augusta. At length the way being somewhat cleared, the doctor made his "grand entree," at the head of about half a dozen young ladies, all dressed and bedizened off in the latest and most exquisite fashion, with flowing head-dresses, and many other little killing appliances of the toilette, which showed to great advantage, and rendered them as irresistible to the beaux, as a phalanx of grenadiers. The doctor felt the importance of his position,—they were "the observed of all observers," and he the observed of them; at least he made himself so, for he flew about them with the graceful agility of a professor of the "poetry of motion," ordering off a little gang of urchins who had taken possession of his front bench, informing them, in a voice loud enough to be heard above all the confusion, that he had "secured them seats from the manager himself."

Some time elapsed, during which the crowd, which was really immense, settled down into their

seats, and feasted their eyes on the wonders of the amphitheatre, and drank in the rich tones of a very respectable band for a travelling circus. The doctor, in the mean time, entertained the ladies and those in his immediate vicinity, by pointing out to them the various fixtures of the ring, explaining their purposes, and in some measure anticipating their enjoyment, by relating what was to take place.

The audience had not yet grown impatient, when a tall, pale-faced mulatto, his hair brushed up to a cone, with an unreasonably long frock-coat, and a pair of boots with red morocco tops, which he wore over his pantaloons, rushed suddenly from behind a brass curtain in the rear, threw open the low enclosure into the ring, and as suddenly disappeared. What did all that mean? Astonishment was depicted in every countenance, but this soon gave place to amazement; for the next moment, a loud blast from the band,—and in they came,—the horses leaping furiously into the ring, while their riders, dressed in their gaudy costumes, all glittering with silver and gold, with their white waving plumes and flowing sashes, looked like so many knights of the olden time. In their rear, and on a horse so small that he would perhaps have been overlooked, was the clown, who, as soon as he entered the ring, shouted out, "Come along here, all my equestrian performancers!" Ranged in a line across the ring, each young gentleman doffed his beaver, and made a graceful obeisance to the audience; then, suddenly wheeling off, they dashed round the ring at the top of their speed,

which set the ladies to holding their breath, and the children to grasping their parents' knees or arms, whichever were handiest, and some whimpered a little; but upon being told that they should go right straight home if they didn't be good, they drew closer and were quiet.

"Oh, my gracious!" gasped Miss Mary Stullings, as one of the horses made a slight stumble.

"Don't be scared, Miss Mary, it's only the grand entree."

"But wont they fall off, doctor?"

"Not a bit, they wont—they're used to it, they don't never fall off."

"Oh, what a pretty little boy!" said Miss Johnson; "he's just like Coopid, for all the world."

"Oh, pa! look at that spotted man,—his horse can go just as fast as any, can't he, pa? What's he got them long red things sticking up in his head for, pa—say, pa?"

But pa was too deeply engaged to hear or answer these interesting queries.

"No, you don't!" shouted the spotted man, as he reigned his horse across the ring from the rear and placed him in front of the flying troop—"this child aint to be beat, no how you can fix it!"

A loud burst of laughter followed this ruse of the clown, which was prolonged by the negroes from the corner where they sat stowed away like a pile of bricks. Just as the audience were getting dizzy at the incessant and impetuous whirl of men and horses before them, the troop suddenly came to a halt, and, at the word, all the elegantly caparisoned

horses extended themselves upon the ground, as if to rest from the fatigue which they had so lately undergone. All but the clown's were perfectly docile—*he* found considerable difficulty in managing his horse. When he bore down its neck it would switch its tail, and when he stood on its tail it would raise its head; which refractory and very ungenteel conduct, he reprehended in strong terms, but all to no purpose. Finally, a downright quarrel ensued between them; and, while the horse chased him round the ring, he called lustily to his master to "take him off," remarking that he held biting and kicking to be extremely vulgar, and would fight no one who practised such foul play. This difficulty settled, the troop again mounted, made another respectful obeisance, and retired amid the shouts and cheers of the delighted audience.

The time which elapsed between this fête and the next, was passed in conversation. The doctor reminded the ladies that that was nothing to what he had seen in Augusta. The ladies thought it was a "dreadful pretty sight, if they didn't skare one so." The doctor begged them not to *be* skared, and assured them that there was not the "least particle" of danger.

Miss Johnson desired to know of Miss Rogers, which of the circus-men she "liked the best."

"Oh, that tall one, with the black curly hair; I do think he is the handsomest young gentleman I ever saw."

"Oh no, I think that one with the white silk jacket and blue sash is a great deal handsomer—

and he looked over here so hard," said Miss Stullings.

"Why you all can't tell how they look, at night, dressed up so," remarked the doctor. "That's Howard, you mean, Miss Mary, and he's pock-marked as the mischief."

"Ha, ha!" laughed Miss Rogers, leaning back, and placing her handkerchief to her mouth,—"the doctor is jealous."

"No, I aint," replied the doctor.

"Aint you 'shamed, Lucy," said Miss Mary, colouring at the same time that she sent a look of reproach towards Miss Rogers.

"If you could only see them by day-light, in their common clothes," said the doctor; but he was interrupted by that long-faced mulatto whom we have before described, who now made his appearance with a white horse, and, directly after him, came the ring-master, with a long whip, followed by the clown, who announced his coming by shouting—"Come along here, Mr. Callahan, we'll have a little bit of your fun!"

Now there was a buzz throughout the audience—the music struck up, and away went Mr. Callahan, standing erect on his horse and throwing himself into all manner of graceful attitudes—now looking back, as if he had left something behind—now pointing ahead, as if he saw something in front—now on one leg, then on the other, and finally brought his fun to a close by making several lofty leaps, his horse at full speed, over whips, hoops, garters, canvass, &c., &c.—the clown all the while keeping up

a running conversation with his master, the horse, and the rest of the company—saying many witty things, which kept the whole audience convulsed with laughter.

Next came the spring-board, which the doctor at once recognised, and the whole troop were engaged for some twenty minutes, in "feats of ground and lofty tumbling," each one of which elicited torrents of applause; and the doctor having introduced the more fashionable mode of expressing approbation, the clapping of hands had by this time become very general. The clown failed in every attempt.

"Why, pa," said one little fellow who had watched the spring-board performances for some time with a countenance of painful seriousness, "that spotted man's a fool, aint he?"

"Yes, my son, he's a very good fool."

"What do the people clap their hands so for, pa?"

"They are clapping the performers, because they do so well."

Just then it came the clown's turn to throw a somerset over the back of a chair, instead of which, he jumped awkwardly against it, and pitched chair and all on the ground; then springing up and applying a little saw-dust to his nose,—his sovereign remedy for bruises and sprains,—he walked off with an air of triumph, as much as to say—beat that who can!

A tremendous round of applause followed.

"They clapped the spotted man because he done it so bad,—didn't they, pa,—say, pa?"

During the performance of these novel antics there was a very general stretching of necks on the lower seats, and the cry "hats off in front!" was heard from all quarters. On a front seat, in the very thickest of the crowd, sat a fellow well known as fighting Bill Sweeny, with one of those ponderous structures of wool and rabbit's fur on his head, denominated a bell-crowned hat, but rather more resembling an inverted church-bell, than the modern article designed for the covering of the "dome of thought." Bill gloried in his celebrity as bully of the county, and such was the obstinacy of his nature, and so much did he delight in an opportunity of picking up a fight, that he would not have removed that hat without one, though it had eclipsed the view of one half the audience. When asked to "just please to take it off, Mr. Sweeny," in the gentlest and most persuasive tone possible, his reply was a nudge of the elbow, and, "oh go to h—ll, will you?"

The performances went on. Bill sat with his hands thrust in his pockets, intently watching every movement, occasionally laughing and swearing to himself, "how smart they *is!*" Presently, just as the clown was doing "eels in the mud" with such rapid velocity that he looked "for all the world" like some great spotted snake, writhing and twisting in wildest contortions, Bill felt and heard a thundering, crashing pressure from above, and the next moment all was darkness to him, while the shouts and yells of the audience fell in smothered tones upon his ears. His first impression was that the pavilion had fallen in; but as he sprang from his seat and

found his arms firmly pinioned behind, and the shouting increased, he was at once convinced that the boys had been "projectin'" with him. Mad with rage, he leaped like a cat into the ring—his arms still tied and his hat resting upon his shoulders, as if his neck and part of his head had actually been driven into his body—shouting as well as he could for the obstruction of his head-stall—"Unloose me! unloose me, I say! and I'll whoop the whole bilin' of ye!"

An effort was made to get him out of the ring by those whom the confusion had thrown into it—the circus-men taking no part in the fray. Not being able to get his hands to his head, he was still in darkness; and, as his "next friend," a drunken bully of a fellow, approached him with—"Here, Billy, don't be so fractious—I's your friend, you knows I is"—he gave him such a kick on the shins as set them together by the ears in a twinkling. Bill had broken the cord that bound his arms, and now they had it, good Georgia fashion—best man on top. Notwithstanding he was muzzled, the disadvantages under which he fought were not so considerable as one might suppose—for if he was deprived of the use of his mouth, his eyes were equally out of harm's way, while his experience enabled him to feel in the right place for those of his antagonist.

There was some confusion among the audience—some of the ladies were for retiring,—but the manager requested all to keep their seats, while the doctor called upon the gentlemen present to part the two bullies who were now making the tan and saw-dust fly at a tremendous rate. Some dozen volunteered

their services, the doctor urging them on—but the Sweeny blood was "riz"—and blind not only with rage, but by reason of his hat still being over his eyes, he fought at random and with desperation; and for a few minutes there was ground and lofty tumbling with a vengeance. But poor Bill was forced to strike to superior numbers, and was borne out of the ring, where he was finally pacified, after his hat had been removed; which, however, was much harder to come off than it had been to go on. It required a long pull and a strong pull—indeed some fears were entertained of his neck giving way; and the doctor, who had taken an active part in the matter, after the fighting was over, facetiously remarked that it was a very fortunate circumstance that Mr. Sweeny's nose, which had become tangled in the lining, was not large, and was inclined to the snub, or he should have been under the necessity of sending home for his instruments.

Quiet having been once more restored, the performances were resumed. Several surprising acts of horsemanship had been gone through with, the audience had nearly forgotten the late interruption, in their enjoyment of the evening's entertainments, and the clown was taking a little ride to himself, to the tune of "a little frog would a wooing go," when in tumbled another man with a bell-crowned hat, almost under the horse's feet! The music ceased—the horse came to a halt, and the clown desired the man to leave the ring. But the fellow scrambled up and walked as well as he could (for he was evidently very drunk) still further into the forbidden circle,

and said, between a hiccup and a drunken leer, that he had come to ride.

"Who-o-o-o!" exclaimed the clown—"*you* ride a circus-horse!—did you *ever* hear such insurance?"

"I say, Spotty——"

"Mr. Merryman, if you please."

"Well, Mr. Merryman, if you please, wont you give me a ride?"

"Who-o-o-o! you must go out of here, I tell you."

The doctor could not sit still. "Now that's too bad," said he. "Who is that drunken fellow, now, come to kick up another fuss? If he was in Augusta, they'd have him in the guard-house in less than no time."

"I paid my half dollar to come in here, and I'm gwine to have a ride or a fight, one. I doesn't pay money to see other people ride, myself."

"I'll call master. Master-r-r-r!"

"Fetch him out, if you've got any grudge agin him, and I'll lick him too," said the man with the bell-crowned hat, as he laid hold of the clown's leg and began pulling him off the horse.

"Murder! robbery! thieves! burglary and kidnapping!" shouted the clown.

The audience began to get alarmed again—the doctor rose in his seat and called to the crowd to "turn him out!" The ring-master came running in, evidently much exasperated.

"What's your name, sir?" he demanded.

"Eh?—my name's Joe Peters, from Cracker's Neck; do you want any thing out o' me?" throwing himself into a fighting attitude.

"If this man has any friends here, they will do well to take him out before he gets into difficulty," said the ring-master.

"Yes, before I get hold of him," added the clown.

"What's that you say, Spotty?" said Joe, turning to the last speaker.

Here the doctor excused himself to the ladies, strode across the ring, and, laying his hand on Joe's shoulder, peremptorily ordered him to leave the enclosure.

Joe turned, and placed himself in a defensive position.

"Come, some of you gentle*men*, and help turn this blackguard out of the show," said the doctor, beckoning to a group of young men.

"That's right, doctor, take him off before he gets hurt, for maybe his ma don't know he's out."

Two young men came to the doctor's assistance, but no sooner had the one in advance come close to Joe, than he turned round and ran back, exclaiming in an under-tone—"That chap belongs to the show, I can smell it on his breath!"

The other followed his example, leaving the doctor alone to manage the intruder, who now staggered up to him, and demanded if he wanted to fight. The doctor grasped him by the shoulder, and had succeeded in forcing him some distance towards the door, amidst the gibes and taunts of the audience, when Joe became more resolute in his resistance, declaring he *would* have a ride. A scuffle ensued, during which a good part of the audience were shouting and cheering,—some for the doctor and some for

Joe—but there was no bounds to the tumult when Joe, thrusting his head between the doctor's legs, raised him off the ground, and dancing once or twice round the ring, despite that gentleman's most determined efforts to dismount, which he manifested by throwing his legs and arms about in the wildest confusion, tossed him pell-mell on the heads of the negroes, who squalled in concert with the general shout.

The doctor was dreadfully mortified at this unlooked-for reverse, and was about returning furiously to the charge, when the clown approached him with a significant wink.

"Never mind, doctor, we'll get shut of him—we'll give *him* a ride now." Then turning to Joe, who was approaching the horse's heels, "so, you want a ride or a fight, do you, eh?"

"Yes, I want to ride that 'ere horse, Spotty, and I'm the boy that's gwine to do it, too."

"Well, sir, you've got to whip me first," putting on a savage look and giving his teeth a grind.

"I'm your boy," said Joe, "I's another chick to Bill Sweeny!"

"The h—ll you is!—just give Bill Sweeny a fair shake and he can whoop blue blazes out of ye, though," growled the bully of the county, who was again in his seat.

The clown put himself into a pugilistic attitude. Joe was up to the mark, and, after a few passes, was knocked heels over head on the tan.

"Oh!" exclaimed the ladies.

"Serves him right!" said the doctor—"he'll get his fill before he quits that ring."

"Hurra, Joe! show your game!" shouted several.

"Give it to him, Spotty!"

"Oh, I want to go home," cried a timid little fellow, from between his father's knees.

The next minute Spotty was down, who, as soon as he struck the ground, shouted—"Enough, take him off!" Then springing up and applying a handful of tan-bark to his nose, he extended the other hand to Joe, remarking—

"You've whipt a gentleman, Joe,—what's your name?—oh, ah, Peters! Mr. Joseph Peters, from Cracker's Neck. You shall have a ride, Mr. Peters. Will you have a fresh horse, Mr. Peters?" Then turning to the doctor, he continued—"We'll give him a ride—there's more ways to kill a dog besides choking him with butter, you know."

Joe was soon mounted, with his back towards the horse's head. The clown called out for the hardest trotting-tune the musicians could play. Pop went the whip, and away flew the horses, Joe floundering on his back like a drunken man in a quagmire.

"Now, doctor," called out the clown, "if you want to see a cracker's neck cracked——"

"Good enough for the fool," exclaimed the doctor with a conceited chuckle.

"Oh, mercy!" screamed the ladies, as Joe pitched forward, and seemed only to hold to the neck of the flying charger, with one arm.

But what was their astonishment when they beheld him first rise to his knees on the saddle, then to his feet, where he stood reeling and tottering as if h

was about to be dashed to the ground, while the horse continued at the top of his speed.

"Whoop-e-e!" shouted the clown, "if Joe aint on his feet!"

"Good gracious!" exclaimed the ladies. The doctor stared, but said nothing.

Joe now dropped the bridle, and said he felt warm.

"Take off your coat to it, Mr. Peters," replied the clown; "you've got plenty of friends here."

Off came Joe's frock-coat and his bell-crowned hat, and the general opinion was that his personal appearance was much improved by the change. The clown had donned the coat and hat, and now cut a more ludicrous figure than ever, as he followed round the ring, picking up the coats and vests which Joe threw off one after the other to the number of twenty, or more. At length Joe had come to the last vest, and was unbuttoning his suspenders, when the clown called out—

"Stop, Joe! stop! there's ladies here!"

But off went the pants, while the clown, with his hands over his face, continued—

"Stop! stop!—oh, Joe! aint you ashamed of yourself?—oh, for shame!"

Then uncovering his face, he beheld his man Joe transformed into a woman, trigged out in a flounced muslin, and a fashionable opera hat. This sudden metamorphose was hailed with one universal squall from the audience, while the clown shrank aghast from the apparition of a wife from whom he had absconded. But on went the horse amid the deafening shout, when suddenly the female dress dropped from

the rider, and there stood Mr. Harrington revealed, in all his gilt and spangles, who, after a few extra feats, just to show them what Joe Peters, from Cracker's Neck could do, threw a backward somerset from his horse and retired, amidst the reiterated acclamations of the audience.

The clown, who now presented the appearance of a wonderfully corpulent man, having stuffed Joe's coats, jackets, gown, &c., into the waist of his coat, approached his master, with a chop-fallen air, and inquired—

"Master, can you tell me why I'm very much like our friend, the doctor?"

"No,—why are you?"

"'Cause," said he, unbuttoning the coat and letting the garments fall at his feet—"'cause I feel a great deal smaller than I did a while ago."

Such another shout as followed, never before re-echoed through the quiet streets and lanes of Pineville. The doctor was in every mouth—"Hurra for the doctor!"—"How do you feel now, doctor?"—"Is that the way they does in Augusta?"—"When you gwine to show agin, doctor, I's sure to come"—and a hundred other such jeers were aimed at the unfortunate doctor; who, mortified to such a degree that he knew not what to do with himself, rose in his seat and addressed the almost frantic multitude—

"It's a fact, ladies and gentle*men*—I was most oudaciously tuck in that time—that's a fact."

Fortunately, it was the last act of the performances, for such was the ungovernable humour of the crowd, after what had happened, that it would

have been utterly impossible to re-establish order that night.

How matters were conducted on the following night—positively the last of the "Great Attraction" in Pineville—we have not learned; we have heard it hinted, however, that Dr. Peter Jones did not attend, though he was loudly called for by the audience.

BOSS ANKLES,

THE MAN WHAT GOT BLOWED UP WITH A SKY-RACKET.

Long time ago, when Pineville was "another sort of a place" to what it is now—I do not mean the term in the superlative sense in which it is usually applied, but in its literal meaning—when, indeed, it was a very different sort of a place—long before the "Great Attraction" made its appearance, or Parson Storr's Temperance Society was organized, and when Dr. Peter Jones was a little flaxen-headed boy, it was customary for Mr. Harley and Mr. Coonsey, and the rest of the store-keepers, to have a little back room in the rear of their stores, where they usually kept a barrel of whisky or rum on tap, just merely for convenience of sampling. It was the practice, in those days, to take customers into the little back apartment, and give them a sample or two of the liquor before they commenced trading. Sometimes these samples amounted to good round "horns," but these were only given to test the wearing qualities of the liquor, for those who use the article assert, that some liquors that are well enough to the taste, do not rest so well on the stomach, especially when taken in large doses. Among those who visited Pineville, there were not a few connoisseurs in rum, some of whom often found

it impossible to get suited in the article short of a trial of every store in town, at each of which they obtained considerable samples, as an inducement to expend a portion of the change which they had brought with them to purchase homespun, calico, salt, rum and tobacco, and such other "truck" as their necessities called for.

Mr. Harley was a considerable store-keeper for the time, and was one of the most accommodating sort of men. He usually kept three or four different barrels on tap, and not only gave large samples, but took every pains to suit the taste of his customers by commending to them the liquor of each barrel. It was, perhaps, owing to this circumstance, that his door was usually surrounded with the various kinds of vehicles then in use among the country people. It was not uncommon to see a score of sore-backed, wind-broken rosinantes, and as many burr-tailed donkeys, "hanging," as we say in Georgia, to the horse-rack, with some eight or ten little carts, each composed of two wheels and a quantity of pine staves, drawn sometimes by a mule, sometimes by a pair of "critters," and not unfrequently by a single steer, both the plural and singular number being guided by means of a rope or chain about the horns, the method by which cattle of the bovine genus are awkwardly guided at the South, even at this day.

But the proprietors of these grotesque establishments were decidedly the rarest creatures in the animal kingdom. When they came in the morning they looked the most harmless beings on earth; their bilious-looking eyes, and tanney, shrivelled faces—

except those who allowed their mother earth to enter largely into their daily provender, of whom there were not a few in those days—wore a meek and pensive expression, which led one to doubt if the combative principle in them found animal spirits sufficient to nourish and keep it alive. But towards noon, when they had indulged pretty freely in sampling Mr. Harley's liquor, they became quite another sort of beings, and many a scene occurred about the store-door which would have afforded ample field for the graphic pen of the popular sketcher of "Georgia Scenes and Characters." Then might be seen the cadaverous looking wiregrass boy in his glory, as he leaped out into the sand before the door, and tossing his linsey jacket into the air, proclaimed himself the best man in the county. Then, too, might be seen the torpid clay-eater, his bloated, watery countenance illuminated by the exhilarating qualities of Mr. Harley's rum, as he closed in with his antagonist, and showed by his performances that he could eat clay as well in its animate as in its inanimate form. Then there was such bitter cursing and swearing, and biting, and gouging, and such home-sent "licks"—such a war of words among the women, squalling among the little tallow-faced scions—(all under the influence of the samples)—and such a rearing and pitching, kicking and braying, and spilling of carts, and turning things upside down and breaking them, among the mules and cattle—all of which would afford us material for a thrilling scene, were not the business of the present sketch to record an affair of quite a different character.

On those occasions—generally Saturdays of each

week—a man or two was sure to get badly "licked," and towards evening a general evacuation of the town took place. The different lanes leading out of Pineville were studded with China trees, and it was no unusual thing for Mr. Harley's customers to become so oppressed with the heat on their way home, that they were compelled to rest beneath the friendly shade of the trees. There they were almost certain to fall asleep, and from some reason or other —for they never could satisfactorily account to themselves for such indiscretions—slept so soundly that they were as often waked by the rising sun of the following morning, as by the dews of the intervening night. While thus wrapped in the embrace of the drowsy god, they were often made the victims of the village wags, who played such pranks upon the unsuspecting sleepers, that they not unfrequently awoke as thoroughly metamorphosed as was the renowned Billy Button, and as much at a loss to recognise themselves as her of whom the old ballad speaks—

> "There was a little woman, as I've heard tell,
> Who went to market her eggs for to sell,"

But who unfortunately "fell asleep on the king's high-way," and was afterwards only enabled to identify herself by the aid of a favourite dog, of whom she said—

> "I've a little dog at home, and he knows me—
> And if it is me, he'll wag his little tail."

These marvellous mystifications were wrought in various ways, by the use of the marking-pot and the

shears. Sometimes a fellow would wake to find himself minus the pendulous portion of his upper garment, together with the legs or some other portion of his unmentionables, and tattooed like a Carib chief; another perhaps would rouse from his slumbers to find his face as black as lampblack and oil could make it, his wearing apparel altered to an entirely different fashion, and one side, if not his entire head, cropped to the skin. Very few permitted themselves to get caught in this manner a second time, but there was for ever some new victim skulking back into town under cover of the night, in order to repair damages before venturing home to his settlement, who, if he were discovered in season, was sure to be regarded as a proper subject upon which to practise all the deviltry that could be devised by his mischievous tormentors.

One day, in mid-summer, a small party visited Mr. Harley and sampled his liquor as usual, among whom was an individual who answered to the name of Boss Ankles. It was a matter of some speculation how he came by so singular and unmeaning a *nom de guerre*. There was nothing peculiar about his ankles, save that they were uncommonly black, and as he repudiated socks and straps, and was in the habit of thrusting his legs somewhat farther through his copperas-coloured linseys than fashion required, he exhibited rather more of the native shank than is usually exposed to view. The prefix Boss was doubtless acquired from the fact of his affecting to be a leading character in his settlement, and Ankles was probably a corruption of his sur-

name, whatever it was. More than probable he had forgotten the original himself, for he had been called Boss Ankles, Mr. Ankles, Ankles, or Boss, from time immemorial.

As we have intimated, Mr. Boss Ankles was in the habit of taking some state upon himself both at home and abroad, basing his claim to consideration on the ground of his being a "school-keeper" and a professor of music. He performed on the fife, and taught the mysteries of Dillworth's Spelling-book to the rising generation of his settlement; but it is not known that he ever aspired to any thing higher in the scale of educational science.

Boss was what his neighbours called a "monstrous ugly varmint." It would afford us pleasure to set him before the reader, but degrees of ugliness are only to be ascertained by comparison, and having nothing in nature with which to institute such an investigation of Boss's frontispiece, we feel confident that we should fail in any attempt to do him justice; we must, therefore, content ourself by stating, that his face more nearly resembled some distorted human visage than that of any particular animal to which we can liken him. True, his eyes somewhat resembled those of the owl; there was a wildness of expression about those organs which would have done credit to the bird; but here the resemblance ceased, and as the beholder contemplated the next important feature, the mouth, he was at a loss to decide which it resembled most, that of the catfish or sucker—it was decidedly fishy in its structure, and seemed to combine the characteristic

peculiarities of both the species above named. Immensely large at the base, the lips protruded inordinately, and had a downward inclination, which, together with his little red nose, large pale eyes, standing in their circular fields of purple, high cheek bones and long flaxen hair, rendered him an object of curiosity.

We have said that Boss performed on the fife—so he did. On muster-days he was in great requisition in his beat, and when once he succeeded in getting his mouth in readiness, few could beat him on that soul-stirring, ear-piercing instrument. But these performances were attended with much inconvenience to Boss, as he was obliged to consume some time in crimping up and folding away the surplus leather about his mouth, before he could adjust the instrument to his lips, which, when he had arranged them, resembled more the kicking end of a square-toed boot with a hole in it, than any thing else we can think of. When once snugly fixed, he retained his mouth in the same pucker, and seldom took the fife from his face during the parade, unless some one chanced to pass with liquor, a temptation he could *not* resist. When music was again wanted, it was necessary to give Boss a precautionary word in advance, when he would turn his head under his left arm until the plaiting process was again accomplished, then, with a stamp or two of the foot to mark time, he would strike up, perhaps, "Yankee Doodle," and away they marched again.

But our business now is not with the militia-muster, or Boss's musical powers. Leaving these to form

the subjects of some future reminiscences of Pineville, we will return to the evening of the mid-summer day aforesaid.

There had been a considerable party in town that day, but all had gone off unusually quiet—no fighting, and none so drunk but that they knew the way home. Boss had been among the last to leave town, and was, perhaps, the heaviest sampler in the party —but he had gone long before sundown.

It was early in the evening, just after tea, that some six or eight loungers of the town dropped into the store as usual—for it was a sort of rendezvous for idlers, as one might see by the mangled pine boxes about the door—to interchange the news of the day and smoke a few of Mr. Harley's cigars. They had been engaged in such frivolous pastime but a few minutes, when a very strange-looking figure entered the door, and inquired for Mr. Harley.

"Hellow, Boss, is that you? I thought you had gone home long ago."

"Why, Mr. Harley, I never was sarved such a trick afore in all my born days!"

"Eh, what's the matter with you, Boss?"

"Man alive! can't you see?" exclaimed Boss, as he rolled up his great white eyes, and tried to suck in a sigh with his hanging lips.

"Where's your shoes?" inquired Mr. Harley, observing that he was barefooted.

"They tuck them too—oh, they tuck every thing they could lay their hands on," replied he.

"And your hat?" inquired Mr. Harley.

"Oh, they tuck that too! Man alive, Mr. Harley, they've tititiatiously ruinated me, so they is!"

"Who?"

"You knows as well as I does, Mr. Harley."

"Have you been robbed, Boss?" asked one.

"Where did it happen?" inquired another.

"I'll tell you all how it was," replied Mr. Ankles, grateful for the apparent sympathy of the crowd. "You see, gentle*men*, arter I left here to-day, I was gwine right straight home with the truck what I bought of Mr. Harley tied up in a bundle, and it was monstrous heavy, and it was ding hot, too, down thar in the lane, so I sot down to rest a bit under the trees, and somehow or other I got asleep, and—and—you can jest see what happened to me. Some oudacious cus-o'thunder," continued he, warming up as he approached the climax, "jest come and tuck my bundle, and the jug of spirits and every thing, and left me in this here fix."

"And stole your bundle and jug?"

"Yes, and the very shoes off my feet, and my hat off my head, as was a bran new one I bought here to-day."

"Well, that *was* rather a rough joke, that's a fact."

"Man alive, I never heard of sich a oudacious perceedin' in all my life. This town's got a monstrous bad name for meanery and shecoonery of all sorts, but I never know'd they 'low'd pirates here afore."

"It truly is a bad business, Boss."

"Jest look at my sitivation—I can't go home in this here fix. The folks would swar I was tossicated—

I know they would—though I was only overcome a little with the heat, and know'd jest as well what I was about when I sot down under them trees as I does now. It aint the valley of the plunder, but it's the principle of the thing I looks at. Whar's the use o' laws and preachin,' if people's to be sarved in this way. Cus the luck—what a pity I didn't wake up—thar'd been old works down thar in the lane if I'd jest happen'd to come to 'bout that time." He concluded with a significant twist of his neck, at the same time clinching his fist, and casting a wild scowl round the room.

"Never mind, Boss, you know accidents will happen. Take something to drink, to keep you from catching cold, and console yourself that it is no worse. They might have taken your coat, you know."

"To be sure they mought—that's a fact," rejoined Boss, with a stare of his owl-eyes, as much as to say he wondered why they didn't.

Boss approved the precautionary suggestion of his comforter, and the clerk having brought some liquor, of which he took a good swig "to keep off the cold," he began to grow familiar, and, sideling up to the counter, assumed a comfortable lounging position, where he soon forgot his misfortunes in the social enjoyment of the hour. He had a great deal to say about matters and things in general—among other topics he dwelt upon the verdancy of his neighbours, and the "shecoonery" which had been practised upon them by the town-boys. For his own part, he never got into "that sort o' difficulty," for people always knew who to project with.

"Why thar's Bill Willson—you know that ugly cock-eyed feller," he continued, "come down to the settle*ment* tother day, with the legs of his trowsers split clear up to the waistband and his coat-tail crapt close off; all the hair off his head, and his face as black as the very old blazes. He liked to skeered his aunt Tobitha Biers out of her senses, and the dogs tuck hold of him jest like he'd been some wild varmint. 'Ha, ha,' ses I, 'Bill, you's been——' ouch! whew! man alive! what's that?" shouted the speaker, and he lifted his feet from under him so suddenly, that he came near pitching on the floor. A lighted cigar-stump had been, accidentally of course, rolled against them. After the two or three first steps of a fandango, and rubbing the spot with his hand, he resumed his position, and would have taken up the thread of his story, but a drink round was proposed after the laugh had subsided, in which Boss had joined out of pure politeness.

After the liquor, came cigars—his friends were very particular to select a large one for Mr. Ankles. Boss wallowed it in his mouth preparatory to smoking. Biting off one end, he was about to light it, when his attention was attracted by a single India-cracker, as they are usually called, which was lying upon the counter. Taking it up and examining it, he asked—

"What on yeath is this?"

"That! why, that," said the one nearest him, casting an inquiring look around, "that's a—a—"

"Cigar-lighter," added a mischievous fellow on the opposite side, with a wink to the crowd.

"Yes, a patent cigar-lighter," continued the first.

"Man alive!" exclaimed Boss,—"well, well, what wont them Yankees make next?" he added, turning it in his fingers.

"They're capital things, Boss, try one."

"How do you fix 'em—how do they do?"

"Why, you see that little string there at the end."

"Yes."

"Well, just light the tip end of that in the candle, and then hold it to the end of your cigar, till you see it begin to fiz a little, and it will light your cigar as quick as a flash. First rate, I tell you."

"Man alive! why, what a thing!"

Boss did as he was directed—he held it patiently to the end of his cigar, upon which he occasionally gave a draw, as he noticed the flashes of the match. He stood statue-like and still during the interesting process—the company sat in mute expectation. Suddenly there was a loud explosion—the cigar, save the stump, which he still convulsively held in his teeth, was shattered to atoms, and his mouth, eyes, and nose, filled with smoke and tobacco. The cigar had been charged, and the powder had singed and blinded him. He sprang into the middle of the floor at a bound, where for a minute he stood utterly bewildered, rubbing his distended eyes, and spitting and gasping from the effects of the explosion.

"Man alive!" gasped he, at length. "What upon yeath was that?—why, it went just like a blaze of fire rite in my face. It like to tuck the wind out o' me."

Boss did not observe the laugh which this strange phenomenon had excited.

"It must have been a bad cigar," suggested one.

"Try another, Boss," said a second.

"No, I thank you, squire, I don't keer to smoke no more to-night," replied Boss, still endeavouring to rectify his disturbed countenance, and all the while wearing that wild look, so peculiar to himself.

He began to entertain some vague suspicions that a trick had been played off upon him, and spoke of retiring; another horn, however, disabused his mind, or rather so totally fermented what little brains he possessed, as to render him incapable of arranging his thoughts on that or any other subject. One suggested the idea that perhaps the persons who had robbed him, having overheard his disclosures, were desirous of taking his life, and had fired in upon him as he was lighting his cigar. Some men, when they are drunk, are apt to imagine themselves beset by thieves, assassins, and all manner of evil doers. Boss was of this sort, and the latter suggestion took at once.

"Yes," said he, "that 'counts for it—some infernal pirate is dodgin' about arter my life now, but he dasent show his face. Let any man, what wants any thing out o' Boss Ankles, just make his 'pearance 'fore his face."

Then stepping to the door, with a mouthful of oaths, he called out—

"Come on with your Booyer-knives and your double-barrelled pistols, you thieves-o'-thunder, and

if I don't whoop the valley of the truck you tuck from me out o' ye, then I aint Boss Ankles."

"Go it, Boss, I'll stand to your back."

"I don't ax no odds of nobody," shouted Boss, smacking his fists together, and leaping about the floor like a cat.

"Boss aint afraid of sky-rockets."

"D—n your sky-rackets," said Boss, "who's them?"

"Look out they don't put 'em to you, Boss—they're sudden death, if they get hold of you once."

"Who is they, gentle*men*?—whar is they?"

"There! there! look out!"

Pop, pop, pop, went a whole pack of "cigar-lighters" about Boss's ears. With a loud yell of terror he tore away from his friends and dashed into the street, shouting for life, while the poppers at his back shone brilliantly in the darkness, as they kept up a sort of irregular *feu-de-joy* until they were all exploded. By this time he had half the village-boys at his heels, whooping and screaming like a pack of hounds in full cry. As the last squib exploded, Boss stopped in his headlong flight, almost out of breath from fright and fatigue, for he had flown on the wings of terror at what he supposed to be an application of the fatal "sky-rackets." When the crowd came up, two or three gathered round with expressions of sympathy and friendship, and ordered the rest to keep at a distance; declaring they would chastise the first man that attempted to harm their friend, Mr. Boss Ankles. Boss was com-

pletely bewildered—his belligerent spirit had fled, and he stood in amazement and fear.

"Who is I done any harm to?—what is I done to be mislisted in sich a way, gentle*men*?—I haint no grudge agin nobody."

The response was a shout.

"Stand your ground, Boss," said his friends, "we'll see you out."

Boss plucked up courage.

"Now you try that agin, if you like it, cus yer picters. The first man that touches me, I'll whip, 'cept I die tryin'. I gives you all warnin', and if you ——"

But another rattling report assailed his ears, and again he was flying down the street, like a comet with a fiery tail, shouting in accents of terror, which were drowned by the clamours of the pursuing crowd.

Coming to a halt as before, his zealous friends again joined him.

"Now, who was that?" demanded one, as soon as they reached him—"Come here, Mr. Ankles, and the first man that attempts to harm you——"

"Gentle*men*," interrupted Boss, "them infernal sky-rackets will be the death o' me—won't nobody keep 'em off me. Do, gentle*men*, keep 'em off this time, for heaven's sake."

"Stand off, you scoundrels—the first man that comes near Mr. Ankles——"

Pop, fiz, pop, pop, and away darted Mr. Ankles like a quarter-horse.

The same scene was repeated ten or a dozen times, and, at each discharge of the poppers, Ankles

took to his heels and continued at the top of his speed until the entire pack was exploded. Twelve o'clock found him still running the gauntlet, bare-headed and bare-footed, and quite exhausted from fatigue, notwithstanding the potent draughts of rum which he was from time to time prevailed upon to take.

The sport was about drawing to a close. The last pack had been exploded, when Boss brought himself to a halt, and announced his intention to die in his tracks. The crowd, as usual, pressed round him; those most conspicuous as his friends placing themselves at his side, declaring their willingness to sacrifice themselves in his defence; when, suddenly, there was a tremendous explosion in their midst! For an instant a livid flame illuminated the scene, which the next moment was shrouded in darkness. There was a moment's panic—a moment's death-like silence, followed by a loud cry of wonder from the flying mob. Then there was some coughing and hard breathing to be heard, and many extravagant expressions of surprise. Some had been knocked down and blinded—these were gathering themselves up and making off as fast as possible. Some three or four of the "ring-leaders" had been more or less burned, and were loud in demanding—"Who done that?" But amid all the confusion that ensued, poor Boss, who lay upon the ground near where he had been standing, was distinctly heard, shouting "Murder! murder!" with the earnestness of a dying man. His clothes had been nearly all blown off him, and the few shreds of his coat

which still hung to his shoulders were on fire. They were soon extinguished, however, by such as were not busied in brushing the crisped hair from about their own faces, or feeling for their eye-brows and winkers in the dark; and those who had so recently been cruelly engaged in making him the subject of their mirth, now did every thing in their power to promote his comfort.

The mystery was soon explained. Boss had, during the day, purchased a quantity of gun-powder, which he had deposited in his coat pocket. This having been ignited by the squibs, had occasioned the extraordinary blow up. Luckily, no serious damage had been done—but Boss was quite sure that *his* time had come.

"You see now, gentle*men*," said he in a gasping tone, "what you's done with yer dratted sky-rackets. You's fixed me off and made a widder of my wife and children. I's a dead man! You see what you all's done, and I s'pose you's satisfied."

By this time 'squire Rogers, near whose residence the explosion took place, made his appearance, and after rebuking the boys, and telling them how wrong it was to use "any poor critter that-a-way," and reminding them that they "didn't know what they mought come to yet afore they died," took the poor fellow in charge and kept him till morning.

On the following day, Boss was enabled to see into the whole matter. He was in a sorry plight, indeed, but a subscription being made up for him, he was fully indemnified for all losses sustained, and departed in a good humour, considering the circum-

stances; not, however, before making a solemn asseveration over a sample of Mr. Harley's best, that he would never take another snooze under the Pineville China trees, or permit himself again to be "blowed up with a sky-racket."

THE MYSTERY REVEALED;

OR THE WAY ALL HANDS WERE "MOST OUDACIOUSLY TUCK IN."

PINEVILLE awoke from the quiet slumber of a starless night. The morning was cloudy and damp, and long after the most fashionable citizens had broken their fast, a dense fog still rested upon the earth, involving houses and horseblocks, shops and snantees, sign-posts and horse-racks, flower-gardens and duck-ponds, chimneys and fodder-stacks, objects conspicuous and objects out of sight, things elegant and things inelegant, (which in our villages are usually disposed in such pleasing contrast,) in one general, indiscriminate obscurity. But the "glorious orb" at length appeared, dispelling the mists and vapors of the upper air, and sending its genial rays aslant upon the scene, imparting life and animation to the Pinevillians, and brilliancy and beauty to the landscape.

Then it was that signs of animal life and enjoyment might have been detected by the discriminating observer. Men and cattle were astir—the former in pursuit of the various occupations by which they obtained a livelihood, and the latter migrating to the woods and fields for the same laudable purpose. The village swine were performing scavenger duty in the streets and yards—the matronly old hens were

lead.ıg forth their young fledglings to the morning repast, scratching up the isolated grubs and disturbing the repose of the indolent bugs that lay concealed among the weeds and rubbish,—while a gang of vagabond goats were performing feats of agility about the court-house steps. But by far the most interesting group was that which had assembled round the piazza of the village hotel, to pick their teeth in company, whittle the backs of the split-bottomed chairs, and discuss the topics of the day. There was a dearth of news just at that time, and conversation was dull. Something was said about the probable price of cotton in the fall, and some grave speculations were made as to the prospects of the corn crop. Old Mr. Hearty, who is generally regarded as an oracle in such matters, expressed his deliberate conviction that the price of cotton would mainly depend upon the quality of the staple, what the planter "ax'd" for it, and what the buyer was willing to give—there was no doubt in his mind about that, it was a settled matter—but as to the corn crop, that depended entirely on circumstances. One ventured the opinion that the rain was over. Sammy Stonestreet—whom the boys universally called Stone*fence*, because of his unconscionable ugliness—said he knew a "yarb" for taking pimples off people's faces, to which Tom Rogers, who was slightly affected that way, replied, that it was a pity he could not find something that would soak the ugly out of his own countenance, which, he said, was enough to give him the night-mare every night of his life. The latter remark raised a laugh at Sammy's expense, and,

after a pause, Billy Wilder asked if anybody had any good tobacco; upon which Bob Echols pulled out a piece about the size of his hand—but in reality only half a *hand* of tobacco—and passed it to Billy, after which it passed through divers other hands until the greater part found its way into the mouths of the bystanders, and not even the slightest moiety would ever have reached its owner again, had not some one on the outskirts of the crowd—who probably had a hole in his pocket—called out "Who's tobacco's this?" Bob owned the remnant, remarking that he "*bought* it at Harley's," and conversation and expectoration became brisk and general.

Some writers would pause here, to give the reader a group of portraits—in other words, to give him a separate and special introduction to the crowd into whose midst we have thus unceremoniously ushered him. But we will not imitate their example, for good and sufficient reasons—first, because we do not claim to be skilled in the limning art, and, secondly, because we consider an unsuccessful portrait no better than a caricature—a libel on the original—and thirdly, and lastly, as the logicians say, because we prefer (and we doubt not but our readers do the same) to form our estimates of individuals from an acquaintance with their characters, rather than by the contour of their features—indeed we find this the only safe way to judge of people.

But as Sammy Stonestreet appears to have been designed and blocked out by nature herself for a caricature upon his species, we may venture to make a dab at his profile, with no very serious apprehen-

sions of spoiling the job; and after informing the reader that the balance of the company was composed of just such a variety as he would be likely to meet assembled at that hour of the day round the door of a village boarding-house, we will leave him to cultivate his acquaintance with them as we progress with our sketch.

Well, then, when we said Sammy was "unconscionably" ugly, we spoke conscientiously. His order of ugliness was perfectly *sui generis*—Boss Ankles, not even the genius of ugliness himself (if there ever was such a deity) could claim kin with Sammy Stonestreet on the score of family resemblance, so peculiar to himself was the style and fashion of his deformity. But for fear the reader should doubt our sincerity in this general allusion to Sammy's personal appearance, we will endeavour to give him some vague idea, at least, of that individual's peculiar form and favour. To begin, then,—Samuel Stonestreet stood, nett (he wore no shoes) five feet one, and a fraction; but he claimed full another inch, in consideration of the angle of his legs, for he was desperately knock-kneed, with a drooping forward inclination of these latteral appendages, which caused him to stand rather in a jumping attitude, upon the palms of his feet. To proceed upwards, he was remarkably short in the cupple, as a wagoner would say, which was probably owing to a most unnatural and unhealthy hump, which seemed originally to have been lodged upon the right shoulder, but which had swayed back and downwards *until it* had given a sort of sidewise twist to his body,

which, as he approached you, swinging his cotton-stalk in his hand, his little gray, sinister eyes twinkling in his head, gave him very much the appearance of one about to deal a blow, and many an unlucky "lick" had poor Sammy received from over-squeamish persons, in consequence of the natural belligerance of his attitude. But to proceed to the climax of mortal ugliness. A short shrivelled neck supported a head of ponderous dimensions—a perfect chaos of phrenological developments—a mental Alps, with promontories and peaks, ravines and valleys, utterly defying any thing like scientific exploration or systematic measurement. But what shall we say of his face? Broad, round, and quince-coloured—but we will, perhaps, succeed better to take a feature at a time—small nose, decidedly snub, with pink-coloured nostrils—eyes, pale, gray, and small, divided by the slightest particle of nose, which seemed stretched upwards solely for that purpose—lips thin and colourless, the upper one short and inclined towards the nose, leaving exposed the teeth of the upper jaw, which projected far over his nether grinders;—mouth large and difficult to close, while the chin, which should have terminated the lower region of the facial territory, seemed to have shrunk entirely away, leaving the neck and mouth in close proximity. But, as if nature's finishing touch had been designed solely to give full relief to this specimen of her handiwork, she blessed Samuel with a profusion of bright saffron-coloured hair, for the better display of which she added a "cow-lick" which held it erect from ear to ear, giving a general contour of face more resembling

a weatherbeaten sun-flower, with a few seeds plucked here and there for eyes, nose, and mouth, than any thing else in nature to which we can liken it. But enough of Sammy's hideousness.

The crowd were engaged, as when we left them, in a sort of running, general conversation, when an incident occurred—for it must be admitted that the passage of a four-wheeled vehicle through a quiet country-village like Pineville, *is* an incident. But the occurrence to which we now more particularly allude, was an incident indeed, one that will not be forgotten while the chronicles of Pineville are remembered. A large dapple-gray horse, evidently much jaded, was seen approaching in a forced trot, drawing a rather dilapidated looking buggy, with two women, in homespun frocks and green veils. Conversation was suddenly suspended, while every eye was directed to the vehicle. It came down the street towards the tavern, but it did not stop. The horse seemed willing, even desirous, as he drew near the sign-post, but one of the women,—not the one who held the lines,—extended a brawny hand, in which she held a stout hickory, and dealt him a blow that tallied its date upon every rib of the side upon which it fell. The poor animal frisked his tail and quickened his gait, but endeavoured to turn the next corner on the opposite side, which effort was, however, promptly counteracted by repeated applications of the aforesaid hickory. Having finally gained the main road, the horse was forced into a rapid gait, in which he continued until lost to the view of the astonished spectators.

Not a word was spoken for full a minute after the passage of the vehicle; but any one who had observed the severe scrutiny with which the crowd regarded those veiled women, and noticed the glancing of eyes and peculiar suspicious expression of their countenances, would have been qualified that but one sentiment prevailed in that company, and that was, that all was not right in that buggy.

Sammy Stonestreet was the first to break silence.

"Dadfetcht," said he, "if I don't bet my best dominecker, (Sam *fit* chickens occasionally,) that them's men in wimin's clothes."

"Pshaw! what a idee!" ejaculated old Mr. Hearty, resuming the seat from which he had risen to get a better look.

"Well, they's monstrous quare lookin' wimmin-flesh, that's a fact," remarked Billy Wilder, with an air of curious gravity; "I never seed a woman hit a hoss sich a lick as that afore in my life."

"And how fast they druv," observed one.

"I'd gin a pretty penny to got a squint at ther faces," said another, "but them dratted veils hid 'em clean."

"I seed 'em! I seed 'em!" exclaimed Sammy, bustling about in the crowd, "and if that one on this side didn't have whiskers, I hope I may never see chinkapin time agin, dadfetch me!"

"But, boys, did you ever see a woman as tall as that one that toated the hickory?" inquired one.

"Well, they didn't look much like any of our gals about ther waists, that's a fact," remarked uncle Hearty, beginning to give in to the popular

opinion. "Take it altogether, it *is* rather a suspi cious circumstance."

"Gentle*men*," remarked Dr. Peter Jones, "that horse has come more than twenty miles this morning, or more likely has travelled all night—a very strong symptom that something's in the wind.'

"Shore enough," said Bob Echols, "and to pass right through town so, without stopping for breakfast nor nothing. I tell you what now, all aint right."

"Well, who is they? whar upon yeath can thev be gwine in sich a hurryment?"

"Ther aint no tellin'," answered Billy Wilder,—"in these times quare things is turnin' up every day They mought be some fellers broke from the penitentiary, or it mought be the sub-treasury runnin' away with the government money."

"That's a fact, and it ought to be seen into," remarked half a dozen in the crowd.

Just at this crisis, old 'squire Rogers, in company with Mr. Montgomery, the schoolmaster, approached from the post-office, from which they had just received their newspapers. The 'squire unfolded the "Columbus Enquirer," and placed his spectacles astride of his nose, while the crowd were relating to him the circumstance of the mysterious buggy, and indulging in their various speculations respecting the probable character of its inmates. After glancing his eyes for a moment over the damp sheet, while some half dozen pressed round and gazed over his shoulder, the old gentleman read aloud—

"DARING AND EXTENSIVE ROBBERY!"
"TEN THOUSAND DOLLARS REWARD!!"

The sensation produced in the crowd by this startling announcement was tremendous.

"Ah! eh! what?—Robbers? where? when?—Didn't I say so? Read it out!—Let's catch 'em!"—came from a dozen throats at once, while Sammy went leaping, like a kangaroo with a split stick on his tail, from side to side, exclaiming—

"Didn't I know, Billy?—didn't I say so, uncle Hearty? Dadfetch me if I's the chap to be fooled with petticoats. Didn't I see boots and trowser's legs under them gowns?"

It was several minutes before any one could be heard above the general clamour of the crowd, which had now considerably increased in number. At length, when order had been in some measure restored, at the request of 'squire Rogers, Mr. Montgomery read the article from the paper, which stated that the Insurance and Trust Company's Bank at Columbus had been broken into a few nights previous by two armed men, and robbed of upwards of $80,000 in specie and bills, and that a reward of $10,000 had been offered for the apprehension of the robbers. Before the last word was fairly out of the reader's mouth, a confusion of voices shouted—"Them's they!"—"Let's catch 'em!"—"No time's to be lost!" and two or three were seen running for the sheriff without further consultation.

In less than five minutes, all Pineville was in commotion. It was now settled in the minds of the majority, beyond the question of a doubt, that a brace of daring bank-robbers had just passed through town disguised as women, and there was not wanting those

who were willing to affirm that they not only saw whiskers beneath those veils, but that pistols and bowie-knives protruded from the bosoms of their gowns; and Sammy Stonestreet was "dadfetcht" if he didn't hear dollars jingle in the bottom of the buggy, when the wheel struck a certain root. There were some obstinate people, who always would have opinions of their own, that could see no reason for entertaining any such suspicion; but these were few, and nobody cared whether they could or not. Half the men in town were going in pursuit—all the horses, old saddles and remnants of bridles were put in requisition, and there had not been such a mustering of old shot-guns and horse-pistols since the Indian war.

"Why, what upon yeath's broke loose now?" inquired Major Joseph Jones, as he rode into the midst of the crowd of armed and mounted men, having just arrived from his plantation.

"Come on, Major," said the sheriff; "you're the very man we want."

"But whar you all gwine, boys—what's to pay?"

"Oh, a heap! robbers! ten thousand dollars reward—escaped in wimin's clothes! with green veils! not more'n fifteen minutes ago!" was all the major could gather from the confusion of voices around him. But he was a public-spirited man, and was determined to have a hand in the game, whatever it was.

"Come on!" shouted the sheriff, and away dashed the whole cavalcade, down the road, rolling back a *thick cloud* of dust from their horses' feet, and raising

"Half the men in town were going in pursuit—all the horses, old saddles, and remnants of bridles were put in requisition."

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a din and clamour that nearly frightened the women and children out of their senses. Another moment, and they were lost to the sight of those whom they had left to indulge in speculations, doubts, and surmises, until their return.

Like a tempest they swept through the country, carrying terror before them, and leaving astonishment and wonder in their train—children ran screaming to their mothers, women shrunk from the doors and windows, dogs barked, and cows ran bellowing to the woods. Onward and onward they sped—already several miles had been gained, and eager eyes were looking up the long stretches of the road in the confident hope of soon overtaking the object of their pursuit. At length the party arrived at a fork of the road—tracks of wheels were discovered in both. A brief consultation was held, when it was determined that the sheriff with one part of the company should take the road to the right, and the major with the balance should pursue that leading to the left. Not a moment was to be lost.

The party are already divided, and each division pursuing its respective route at the top of their speed. We will go with the sheriff.

Continuing the same rapid gait, the sheriff's party proceeded about two miles, when, meeting a horseman with whom they were all well acquainted, they asked if he had met a buggy with two women in green veils.

"Yes," said Mr. Hopkins, "I met old Mrs. Curloo and her daughter Nancy, in a buggy just back here a-piece, gwine down to Billy Curloo's, on the Runs."

"Are you certain it was Mrs. Curloo?"

"To be sure I is, for I stopped and chatted with 'em a minit; but they was in a monstrous hurry, as they said Billy was gwine to make a die of it and had sent for 'em."

This was perfectly satisfactory, and the sheriff and his party, chop-fallen and mortified in the extreme, turned back to town, with only one consolatory reflection wherewith to relieve their deep chagrin, which was, that the other party were likely to be worse fooled than themselves.

"Now, this has all come of listening to that abominable fool, Stonestreet," remarked the sheriff, as they rode leisurely along on their return. "I had no confidence in his story in the first place; but everybody seemed to agree with him, and, under the circumstances, the least I could do was to investigate the matter."

"I was a-most certain it was all a piece of non sense in the first place," remarked a rather elderly member of the party, who had but a few minutes before been the boldest and most determined in the pursuit; "but nothing would satisfy 'em but I must come. I wouldn't a gin the old mare sich a brush, not for the whole Curloo generation."

"'Taint that what *I* looks at," said John Hicks—"it's the everlastin' laugh the fellers will have on us. We wont hear the eend of this bis'ness for a coon's age, you see if we do."

"That we wont," said the sheriff; and he laid back in his saddle and took a good hearty laugh at *himself*. "Two women in green veils ride through

our town in haste to see a sick relation, and in fifteen minutes half the inhabitants are in pursuit of them, with guns, pistols, and jack-knives, to take them for bank robbers. Was there ever such a pack of fools?"

At the end of this speech of the sheriff's, he took another laugh, and the whole party made an attempt to raise a general laugh, but it was a shallow affair and soon died away. There seemed to be a conviction resting upon their minds that the laugh was on the other side—that they were much better qualified just then to be laughed at than to laugh. Each seemed desirous of relieving himself of as much of the ridicule as possible. One mentioned the fact that *he* had brought no gun, and another only went along to see the fun; and, finally, they all came to the conclusion that they were not half so deeply involved as the party that were still in pursuit.

Their jaded horses did not travel back so briskly, and it was past noon when they reached the village. Some two or three made it convenient to find business in the country, leaving the sheriff and the balance of their companions in the chase to bear the brunt of the ridicule which was sure to be heaped upon them by those who, for want of horses, had been compelled to remain at home. As the party rode up to the tavern, a crowd of eager inquirers were soon assembled round them, from whom questions came thick and loud.

"Did you cotch 'em?"—"Who was they?"—"Whar's the rest o' the boys?" and a hundred other such interrogatories were put, before the sheriff, who had begun the laugh in advance, had time to state the

facts. As soon, however, as he was allowed a hearing, he made a faithful report of the proceedings, informing them of all that had transpired.

A loud shout ensued, in which the sheriff and his party joined with as good grace as the circumstances would permit. After the noise had somewhat subsided, the shrill, squeaking voice of Sammy Stonestreet was heard in the midst of the crowd.

"You needn't tell me!" he exclaimed; "oh, no, you needn't tell me, 'squire! Them wasn't no Curloos, them wasn't. I knows the Curloos like a book, and I'll be dadfetcht if ther was a sign of a Curloo in that buggy what went through here this morning."

"Did you see the buggy yourself, 'squire?" asked one.

"Oh, no, but it was just on ahead, and Hopkins told us all we wanted to know."

"What Hopkins, Henry or Peter?" inquired another.

"Peter Hopkins, who used to oversee for old man Stullings, you know."

"Oh, yes," shouted two or three, "he's the Hopkins that came so nigh gwine to the penitentiary for stealin' niggers;" and the universal opinion was, that he was not worthy of belief, and that just as likely as not he had been sent back by the robbers to put the sheriff off their track.

"I know'd it—it's jest as I 'spected," said Sammy. "Them devils is got clean off after all. Pete Hopkins aint no better nor he should be, and I wouldn't swar he wasn't in cahoot with 'em!"

Some further inquiry was made about Hopkins. His character sank a degree at every probe, until it was far below the moral zero, and when it was understood that he had disappeared shortly after his interview with the sheriff, the suspicion that he was leagued with the robbers was entertained by all those who still hoped that the very worst surmises of the morning, respecting the inmates of the buggy, might prove true; which, as is usually the case, on such occasions, comprised much the largest portion of the company.

The sheriff, fully satisfied in his own mind as to the character of the strangers, soon after retired, leaving the crowd to indulge their various speculations. Uncle Hearty winked his eye significantly, and remarked that it was a very "quare way to do business, to ride ten miles after robbers, and git rite up to 'em, and then come away without so much as ever settin' eyes on 'em."

"Did you *ever!*" said a bystander—"and then for to go and take Pete Hopkins's word all about it!"

"I didn't like the perceedin', myself," remarked the elderly gentleman before alluded to, as one of the sheriff's party; "but *he* was the sheriff, you know."

"Sheriff or no sheriff, you wouldn't choked this child off that a-way," said one with a resolute twist of the head—"I'd seed whether they was Curloos or not, I'll be bound."

"Gentle*men*," said Sammy Stonestreet, "them was no more Curloos than I is. Why, Lord bless you, Nancy Curloo aint more'n so big, (measuring

with his hand from the ground,) and don't know a green veil from a bed-quilt."

"And I'd like to know," remarked a very calculating little man, "what they would come away round through town for, to go to the Runs, when they could just cut across by Parker's Bridge, and save more than five miles of the distance."

"That's a fact," chimed in a dozen who were familiar with the road.

Indeed, so settled had become the opinion, among the crowd of gossips who thronged about the tavern, that the sheriff had been misled, that there was some talk of getting up another party to go in pursuit of the robbers. But it was getting late, and the few horses left in town were unfit for service, after the fatigue of the morning. Besides, it was confidently expected that the party then in pursuit would come upon the track which had been so stupidly abandoned by the sheriff; in which event their capture was inevitable. Sammy expressed the most unbounded confidence in Major Jones, giving it as his opinion that if the major once got on their trail, he would follow them to Florida before he would allow them to escape.

But the winds themselves are not more changeable than public opinion; and as well might one attempt to hold the unseen currents of the air in check, as to stay the tide of public sentiment, when once the elements of reaction are at work. There are always some one or two persons in every small community, who lead the mass, and, as when some avant-swine breaks through the barrier that circumscribes the

wanderings of the herd, the balance are sure to rush impetuously through the same hole, so the multitude are certain to give unanimous assent to the opinions of those whose lead they are accustomed to follow.

Among the acknowledged sense-keepers of Pineville, Mr. Montgomery, the schoolmaster, stood "A. No. 1," and it was just the easiest thing in the world for him to blow all Sammy Stonestreet's cherished notions to Ballyhack. The old gentleman was utterly astonished at the credulity of his fellow-citizens, and was surprised beyond measure that anybody should entertain for a moment the very ridiculous suspicions that had been indulged that morning. The town was coming to a pretty pass, indeed, that two poor women could not drive through to see a sick relation without being pursued as bank-robbers. He had no opinion of the proceedings in the first place, but since the sheriff had returned, he thought that every one ought to be satisfied as to the character of the strangers. 'Squire Rogers was decidedly of his opinion, and Mr. Peter Hopkins, who had been detained by business on the road, having arrived in town and reiterated and confirmed the statement of the sheriff, the almost unanimous opinion was that the whole matter was a piece of perfect "tom foolery," and that the party that had gone in pursuit, and especially those that were still absent on that business, ought to be ashamed of themselves.

Only one solitary individual had the hardihood still to proclaim his conviction that the strangers were not what they represented themselves to be, and that obdurate individual was Sammy Stonestreet.

"Never mind," said he, "you'll see—maybe I *is* a fool, and Mr. Montgomery knows every thing—but I'll be dadfetcht if I don't know what I does know, jest as well as anybody—and I know I seed whiskers and trowsers, and I know I can tell Nancy Curloo and her mother from two dratted grate big strappin' men, if they is got gowns and green veils on. But you'll see—jest wait till Major Joe comes, will you?"

And, sure enough, they did wait for Major Joe and his party, but not with the same anxious hopes that filled the bosom of the inveterate Sammy. They waited the arrival of their absent friends, in order that they might heap upon them the overwhelming measure of their ridicule, by the bestowal of which they hoped to mitigate, in some measure, the deep chagrin which they felt for the part themselves had taken in the ridiculous affair.

The hours rolled off. It was sunset, and yet the Curloo chasers, as they termed them, had not arrived. The crowd still lingered about the hotel, eager to greet them, and many was the funny remark and witty joke enjoyed at the expense of the absent. But all this was nothing to what was in store for them on their arrival.

"Never mind—you'll see!" was all that Sammy could say.

"Yes, you *will* see," said one; "you'll see one of the sneakinest lookin' gangs of fellers that ever was in Pineville. The fact is, I b'lieve they're ashamed to come home."

"I shouldn't wonder if they was," chimed in uncle *Hearty*.

"I'll bet Major Jones don't show his face in town for a month," remarked one of the crowd. "But as for Dr. Pete, it aint the first time he's been tuck in, tryin' to get people to git the reward. *He* oughtn't to mind it a snuff."

"That's a fact, the doctor's been monstrous unlucky," said another; "he got his mouth badly mashed that time when he tuck the major, and I wouldn't be surprised if he was to git his dratted neck broke some of these days with some of his smartness."

It was now quite dusk, and still no signs of the party; various surmises and conjectures were advanced as to the probable cause of the delay. Some thought they had gone so far, in their headlong haste, that they had not yet been able to retrace their steps —others were apprehensive that their horses had given out, while much the larger portion were of opinion that they were really ashamed to come home in daylight.

"Never you mind," said Sammy, as he stood with his gaze intently directed down the road.

The crowd were growing more and more impatient, and the prospect of being compelled to forego the fun they had anticipated in quizzing and ridiculing the Curloo chasers, began to operate as a check upon the hilarity of the hour, when, suddenly, Sammy was heard to exclaim—

"Look! see!—ah! eh?—yes, yander—dadfetcht, yander they is—hurra, boys!—now we'll see!" and away he ran, followed by the whole company, in the direction of the road, in which a group of

mounted men were dimly seen, slowly approaching the town.

In another minute Sammy was dancing about in a perfect ecstasy, shouting as he flourished his cotton-stalk over his head,—"I told you so!—here they is!—them's they!—them's the Curloos! Hurra for Major Jones!—I know'd he'd cotch 'em. Maybe I is a fool—maybe I don't know a man with a frock on from a Curloo!"

And sure enough, to the utter astonishment of everybody except Sammy Stonestreet, there they were—two individuals in women's clothes, with veils. It was too dark to observe the precise colour of the veils, but as the two who wore them were led along in the midst of the horsemen, burdened with ropes and cords about their necks and arms, the crowd were at once satisfied of their identity, and with one voice, or rather in a confusion of voices, pressed their inquiries as to the whereabouts and manner of their capture. But it would have taken more tongues than were in that little party to answer half the interrogatories of the fast collecting citizens, and they hurried on to the magistrate's office, where it was understood all would be revealed.

All Pineville was in an uproar. "They've caught 'em!" was the universal cry of old and young, as they hastened to join the crowd that had assembled around 'Squire Rogers's office, which was now promptly lighted up and put in readiness for the customary magisterial investigation. Sammy Stonestreet was in his glory, and could not refrain from raising the skirt of one of the prisoner's frocks with

his stick, that he might exhibit the boots and "trowsers" which he had testified to in the morning. "Didn't I say so!" he would exclaim,—"maybe I *is* a fool and can't tell trowsers when I see 'em."

At length, every thing being in readiness, 'Squire Rogers having taken his seat at his desk, adjusted his spectacles upon his nose, and placed the Bible and the Georgia Justice in fearful array before him, the prisoners were summoned into the presence of that worthy functionary of the law. As they were ushered into the lighted room, they were observed to hold down their heads and gather their veils closer round their faces. All eyes were directed upon them, and 'Squire Rogers regarded them for a moment through his spectacles with legal severity.

"A pretty pair of birds, really," said his honour, "to be circumlocutin' about the country in this way"—then he whispered a few words in Mr. Montgomery's ear and resumed—"but we'll try to take care of you for the futer;"—but the noise was so great that he could not proceed, and he commanded, "Silence in court!" "I s'pose," resumed the 'squire, "you thought we was all asleep, down here in Pineville, and you would just ride through our town with perfect infinity, dressed out in them wimin's toggeries."

Here the sheriff inquired what had been done with the buggy, to which Major Jones replied, that it was coming on in charge of Dr. Peter Jones and Bob Echols—the horse was completely broken down, and they were obliged to travel very slow.

This explanation was perfectly satisfactory, and the 'squire proceeded. Taking up his pen he wrote in large round characters, "*State of Georgia*," then, after referring to the Digest before him, he demanded of the prisoners their names.

There was some hesitation on the part of the prisoners.

"Come," resumed the 'squire, "you mought as well speak 'em out; I don't think sich characters as you need be 'shamed of this respectable company." Then looking steadfastly at them, with all the dignity of his station, he again demanded in a stern voice, "*What mought be your names?*"

Upon which they threw up their veils and answered—

"Bob Echols and Peter Jones, at your service!"

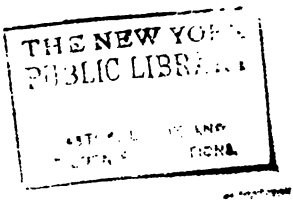
The 'squire, in his sudden amazement, dropped the Georgia Justice on the floor, while Sammy Stonestreet's eyes, mouth, and nose, were transformed into so many exclamation points, all expressive of his utter astonishment and surprise.

"Well," he exclaimed, giving vent to a volume of suppressed breath with the word—"if that aint a nice come off, dadfetch me!"

He would, perhaps, have said more on the occasion, but his voice was drowned by the crowd, who now joined in one concentrated shout that shook the very roof, and waked the echoes in the remotest quarters of the village.

In the midst of the confusion 'Squire Rogers rose from his seat and placed his hat upon his head, remarking—

"Upon which they threw up their veils and answered—
'Bob Echols and Peter Jones, at your service.'"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"Well, boys, it's my opinion all hands has been most oudaciously tuck in this time!"

The matter is soon explained to the reader. The young men who composed the major's party had learned the result of the sheriff's investigations, from an individual who had been in town during the day, and foreseeing the ridicule that was certain to be visited upon them by their fellow-citizens, had recourse to the trick which they so successfully practised, in order to involve their neighbours in the same dilemma with themselves. The dresses were readily obtained from some of their country acquaintances, and they waited until night, that under its shadows they might the better avoid detection.

ADVENTURE OF A SABBATH-BREAKER.

Mr. Eugenius Augustus Van Scoik was born somewhere "down east," but for the purposes of the sketch which we are about to give of a single incident in his life—an incident the more important for the influence it exerted upon his subsequent career—it is not material that we should state precisely where or when. Suffice it, he had been trained up "in the way he should go," and had been sent forth into the world to seek his fortune, with the fervent admonitions of a pious mother, who concluded her long dissertation upon matters and things in general, with the solemn injunction—"But, Eugenius Augustus, dear, whatever you do, be a good boy and go to meeting every Sunday,"—to which he replied that he would be certain to do so.

Mr. Van Scoik's talents had been devoted to mercantile pursuits—not on his own account, it is true, but on account of his health, which had been delicate from his youth—and he now gave himself out as a professional salesman, in which capacity he had made his appearance in Pineville with Mr. Harley's latest importation of new goods from New York. He was a tall, chalky-complexioned, crane-built, gosling-looking youth, with a very prominent beak, and eyes askew. The nose stuck "right

out," and there was no help for it, but he managed to hide the slight obliquity in the setting of his visual organs, by means of a pair of large-bowled silver spectacles, with green glasses, which he wore under pretext of weakness.

Mr. Eugenius Augustus Van Scoik was a polite, good-natured, Miss-Nancy sort of a young gentleman, and of course soon acquired great popularity among the elderly ladies, to whom he always warranted his goods not to fade, tear, or wear out, and was certain to throw in the thread and little things, even if he had to thumb it a small amount in the measurement of the yards to make up for his generosity. The young ladies, too, thought Mr. Harley's new "store-keeper" a "dreadful nice young man, if he didn't have such a horrid nose," and the community, generally, who had heard his psalm-singing, and noted his punctual attendance at church, every Sunday morning, had marked him down as a very proper young man, notwithstanding his nose; and Parson Storrs had been heard to speak of him as an example worthy of imitation by the young men of Pineville.

But Mr. Van Scoik struggled against a besetting temptation unknown to any but himself. If he had an inveterate, unconquerable "propensity for any thing *in* the world," it was for shooting robins. He delighted in a shot-gun that wouldn't kick much, and a bird that would sit, and he never looked out upon the sky, but his soul panted to be away in the fields with bag and gun. He dreamed of shooting all night, and he ruminated on the subject all the day. He

had not taken a hunt since he left home—he had been so busy in the store—and he determined to have one "fair shake" at the birds, even if he had to go on Sunday. If the truth must be told, he had grown so loose in his morals under the influence of our vertical sun, that he began to entertain very little reverence for those holy ordinances, which, in his youth, he had been taught to obey, and he was only deterred from the commission of what he would once have regarded as an almost unpardonable sin, by the fear of detection. There was now nothing very shocking to him in the violation of the Sabbath —but he would not have had anybody to see him on that day with a gun in his hands for any consideration. He was not long, however, in devising a plan by which he was enabled to indulge his propensity without incurring the risk of being discovered by those whose good opinions he was so anxious to retain.

Accordingly, one beautiful Sunday afternoon, Mr. Eugenius Augustus Van Scoik sallied forth from his boarding-house, and walked gravely along the main street until he reached the edge of the woods, where he was met by a little negro boy whom he had engaged to carry his gun, game-bag, &c., out of town. Finding all right, he dismissed the boy, charging him to be sure to meet him there at sun-down, to take charge of his gun and game. It was the beginning of autumn, and the scene was lovely to behold—the leaves had not yet began to fall, but the chill night-winds had delicately tinged the foliage with every variety of hue, which were soon to

deepen into those bright colours which give such variegated beauty to the southern landscape. As we have said, it was a lovely evening—no cloud obscured the sky, a gentle breeze played through the branches of the trees, and the song of birds mingled with the faint tones of the distant church-bell. Even Mr. Eugenius Augustus Van Scoik could not but feel the calm influence of such a scene, and he felt ill at ease when he remembered the fourth commandment,—endorsed as it was by a doting mother's parting admonition,—and reflected that he was in the very act of violating that sacred mandate. But he endeavoured to silence the chidings of an awakened conscience, as he charged his piece, and meditated death to all the wild fowl that might chance to come within gun-shot of him—especially robins.

He had proceeded but a short distance when he espied a mocking-bird perched upon the branch of a tree, pouring forth its song in its wildest strain of native melody. "Stop!" whispered Mr. Van Scoik to himself—"there's a shot." Creeping up to a convenient distance, he raised his gun and fired—away flew the bird, exceedingly terrified, but unharmed. "That's curious," said he to himself,—"I had a first-rate aim." Having reloaded, he looked around for an object at which to shoot. A robin next attracted his attention—his heart beat double-quick, and his breath was suspended while he crept cautiously up—he was about to pull the trigger when away flew the robin!—He clenched his teeth hard together, but said nothing, as he

brought his gun down from his face. He saw the bird light at a short distance, and hastened in pursuit. His second attempt, however, proved as unsuccessful as the first—he snapped two or three times, and when his gun *did* go off, the robin went off too. "Darnation!" petulantly exclaimed Mr. Van Scoik, (putting the emphasis on *ation*,) as he reloaded his gun—"that's *tew* bad!" Once more he cast his eyes about in search of game, but his firing had disturbed the Sabbath quiet of the place, and the alarmed inhabitants had fled.

Mr. Eugenius Augustus directed his steps into the open woods that lay before him. As he approached a small clump of chinkapin bushes, he heard a slight rustling among the leaves. He advanced cautiously, peered into the thicket, walked round to the other side, and looked closer. He was about to abandon the search, when out flew a large red-headed woodcock, and before he could raise his gun to his face, the saucy bird was far away, chuckling at a tremendous rate, as if in derision of his pursuer. The circumstance was exceedingly aggravating to our sportsman, and he resolved to be more cautious in future.

He had proceeded but a short distance, when, in another cluster of bushes, he heard something moving. "I'll not be bamboozled this time," whispered Mr. Van Scoik, as he brought up his gun and advanced cautiously at "present arms." He had passed half round the thicket, and with his finger on the trigger, was squatting low, that he might the better see in, when suddenly a large bear sprang

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"He looked beneath, and the bear was fast approaching."

from the bushes directly towards him! The gun dropped from his hands—there was a loud scream of terror, and the next moment Mr. Eugenius Augustus Van Scoik and the bear were testing their speed in a foot-race through the woods. He had never dreamed of starting such game so near town, and the sudden surprise having seized upon his legs, they bore him off at their utmost speed. Brimfull of horror, he remembered the fable in the spelling-book, but he had no faith in "acting 'possum" —he cast one look behind—his grim pursuer was close upon him—the next moment he had grasped the trunk of a sapling and was climbing for dear life.

He did not dare to look below until he had ascended some fifteen or twenty feet; he then ventured to reconnoitre his foe, when, to his utter consternation, he beheld bruin hugging the trunk of a larger tree, which, not till then, he discovered grew close by the side of the one he was upon. He watched the movements of the bear with increasing terror, and when he saw him rapidly ascending, and observed his huge claws and frightful tusks, he began to imagine himself torn to pieces by the ferocious animal. Bruin had nearly reached him, when he consulted his safety by moving higher up. He had ascended until the sapling bent with his weight, and he could go no higher. He looked beneath, and the bear was fast approaching! What was to be done? To descend was certain death—and to remain promised a no better fate. The bear was soon opposite him, and with an awful grin, that

showed all his teeth at once, he extended his paw towards Mr. Eugenius Augustus Van Scoik, who, with a convulsive shudder, drew himself into the smallest possible compass, and clung close to the opposite side of the tree, by which means he barely escaped the sharp claws of the animal. Rather than undergo the agony of such close encounter with his grim antagonist, Mr. Van Scoik resolved upon a change of position, and relaxing his grasp, descended a few feet. Bruin soon placed himself directly opposite, and again renewed his doubtful salutations. Up went Mr. Van Scoik, and up went the bear. We will not attempt to describe the looks exchanged between them, nor the peculiar sensations of our sportsman, under the circumstances—as the saying is, "they may be better imagined than described."

Thus the parties remained, with occasional slight variations of attitude, for some time, until the bear, probably becoming fatigued, gradually descended to the ground. Hope revived within the bosom of Mr. Eugenius Augustus Van Scoik. Now, thought he, if he will only go away. But bruin was not to be got rid of so easily—instead of taking his departure, he deliberately stretched himself at the root of the sapling, as if resolved upon taking his prey by siege.

It had now grown late—the sun was fast declining, and Mr. Van Scoik had the melancholy prospect of a roost among the tree-tops for the night, provided he survived so long. Alas, too late he repented the sinful violation of the Sabbath, which had led him into the awful dilemma in which he

found himself. Too late he wished that he had obeyed the summons of the church-bell, and gone to the house of worship, where, if he profited nothing, he would at least have been out of harm's way; and as he cast his eyes down, and contemplated the object of his terror, a superstitious dread came over him—like that which ever haunts the guilty—that the bear was but an instrument in the hands of Providence, and had been specially commissioned to devour him, as the same animal had once been sent to destroy the scoffers of Elijah. Such and similar thoughts passed through his almost frenzied brain, and he would have given all the right, title, and interest he had, or ever expected to have in this world, to have been released from his dreadful situation.

As the shades of evening approached, despair had nearly taken possession of his faculties, when, for the first time during his perilous adventure, the sound of a human voice broke upon his ear. He listened, and his pulse throbbed with new life, as he heard uttered in a low, monotonous strain, a well-known negro chant—

One moonlight night,
I walk'd along,
I hear dis music
Close behind,
Never pay much 'tention—

"Hello!—help!—help, here!" shouted Mr. Van Scoik with all his might.

Never pay much 'tention—

Repeated the negro, not hearing the call for help,

as he went on with his ditty, keeping time with the palms of his hands against his thighs—

I looked around
And what should it be
But a big ole buckey hare?
A big ole buckey hare?
Yes, massa,
A big ole buckey hare!
I hitch'd 'em to my wagon,
And he wouldn't work dar—
I hitch'd 'em to my cart,
And he wouldn't work dar—
I hitch'd 'em to my plough,
Now didn't he rair?

"Help! oh!—you, mister; help, here!" cried Mr. Van Scoik, growing impatient, and beginning to fear that the negro might pass without observing him—

Now *didn't* he rair?
With his spurers on,
And his shoe-boots on,
And his broad-cloth coat—
Now didn't he shine?
Now *didn't* he shine?

"Murder!—help! oh, help here!"

"Who dat?" asked the startled negro, for the first time catching the sound of the voice from the tree. Then stopping short in his path, he listened for a moment in order to gain some further intelligence as to the nature of the alarm, before he determined whether to advance or retreat.

"I say! you mister! come here and take my gun, and shoot this bear!—there's a live bear here!"

"Ki," laughed the negro, "'spec dat's Jocko what skeer dat white man."

As the negro approached, he soon saw into the state of affairs, and not less to his own gratification than that of Mr. Eugenius Augustus Van Scoik, discovered his pet Jocko, of whom he was in anxious search.

"Why, massa, what for you got up da? Jocko no bite nobody. Him got no harm in him no more'n a little kitten. Come down, massa." Then addressing himself to the bear, he continued in a rather different tone—"Come here, sa!—what for you been done gone all de mornin', ha?—been skeer de white man, too—you 'bomination good for nothing!—never mind, ōle feller, I git you home dis time; you no git away any more, now mind dat!"

While speaking, the negro fastened the rope which he had brought for the purpose round the bear's neck, and was about to lead him away; but observing that the man in the tree did not come down, he again called to him, assuring him that there was no danger.

"Come down, massa, Jocko aint gwine to bite you. I bound he never bite nobody, massa."

By this time Mr. Van Scoik's fears had sufficiently subsided to warrant him in descending. He had nearly reached the ground when the bear sprang towards him to the extent of his rope.

"Wah-a-a-w!—hold him!" exclaimed Mr. Van Scoik, again springing into the tree.

"Yah, yah, yah, massa, Jocko only want to play wid you."

But our sportsman's skepticism was not so easily to be removed, nor would he again trust his legs to the ground, until Jocko and his master were far away on their road home. He then came down, examined his torn clothes, searched about and recovered his gun, and, after making a solemn vow never again to go a hunting on the Sabbath-day, set out for home. And never since that day has Mr. Eugenius Augustus Van Scoik been seen prowling about the fields with a gun on his shoulder, on that day which we are commanded to remember and keep holy

HOW TO KILL TWO BIRDS WITH ONE STONE;

OR THE WAY THOMAS JEFFERSON JENKINS GOT A START IN THE WORLD.

In our country the Law *is* the high-road to preferment. That there is no question about the truth of this proposition in the minds of our "promising young men," we may infer from the fact that so large a portion of them adopt the legal profession; but that it is a rough, uneven track, abounding in impediments and obstructions of no inconsiderable magnitude, is a truth equally attested by the failure of so many brilliant geniuses, who either turn back discouraged, or faint by the way-side, without so much as reaching the half-way house to distinction. While a few, by dint of persevering energy, succeed in elevating themselves to that rank in the profession which brings with it wealth, honour, and influence, many a "mettlesome blade" is brought to a premature edge upon the legal Blackstone, only to corrode and rust in oblivion.

Such miscarriages must be accounted for on the principle that "larnin' isn't sense," and their frequent occurrence but serves to illustrate the truth, that a certain amount of mother wit is quite as re-

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quisite a qualification in a lawyer as in a scissors-grinder. For what is knowledge without wisdom? Napoleon might have possessed all the military knowledge of his day, and fought his battles by diagram, and prosecuted his campaigns by theory, but without the popular talents by which he was enabled to put his great political machinery in motion, and to direct and control its action in detail, Europe would have remained undisturbed, and himself unknown to fame. So might Thomas Jefferson Jenkins have read Blackstone and Chitty, and Coke, and all the legal writers from Justinian down, and stored his head with legal lore, until there had been nothing left to learn, and still remained in poverty and obscurity, had he not possessed the tact, genius, common sense, or whatever you choose to call it, which enabled him to turn his acquirements to account.

But before we proceed further with our sketch, it is proper that we should give the reader a formal introduction to our hero, whose claim to the appellation *abnormis sapiens*, we hope to establish by the relation of a few prominent incidents in his career. Imagine yourself, then, dear reader, *vis à vis* with a tall, slight-made young gentleman, in a shabby genteel suit, with straight, light hair, deep-set gray eyes, white eye-brows and freckled face. This is Thomas Jefferson Jenkins, Esq.; and now that you know him by sight, we will proceed to relate the incidents aforesaid, trusting that he may, notwithstanding his uncomely face, grow in your favourable regard, as you become better acquainted with his character.

We might, perhaps, interest the reader by detailing the early "struggles of genius in the pursuit of knowledge under difficulties," but it will be sufficient for the purposes we have in view, merely to glance at the early history of our hero. Thomas Jefferson was not only the architect of his own fortune, but, in accordance with that perverse destiny which often deprives us of our greatest help in our greatest need, he was left at a tender age to settle the foundation upon which his superstructure was afterwards to be reared. With only a mother to guide his infant steps, he trod the path of adversity, and early imbibed, in that severe school, so much extolled by those who have never been compelled to submit to its rugged discipline, many a wholesome lesson. He had learned to *feel*—and if he felt the scorn of the purse-proud, and the neglect of the *respectable*, he felt, too, a consciousness of his own integrity, and a firm reliance in his own powers. Laudably ambitious, and unwilling to yield the palm exclusively to those whose only advantage consisted in the better opportunities secured to them by their wealth, he aspired to the legal profession; and, with only the self-acquired rudiments of an education, applied himself to the study, subsisting upon the meager savings from his own industry, until he had qualified himself for admission to the bar. A lawyer by license, he was not slow to discover that the city of his birth was no field for him. He had no wealth or family alliance to buoy him up, and as his success in life depended directly and solely upon his own exertions, he wisely determined to employ them where

the competition would be less formidable, and where at least he would be free from the disparaging influence of prejudice. Thus Pineville became the theatre of his professional career.

Thomas Jefferson Jenkins had learned enough of the world to know, that, go where you will, "appearances go a great ways," and he resolved to put the "best foot foremost," and to win by a show of consequence, all who might not be capable of appreciating substantial merit, trusting to the practice of that "fidelity and prompt attention to business" which he had announced upon his card, ultimately to gain the confidence of that portion of the community who were not to be taken by mere *ad captandum* means. Accordingly, he engaged board at the hotel, hired a smart servant, and rented an office on the square, over the door of which he placed a sign-board, inscribed with gilt letters—

"THOMAS JEFFERSON JENKINS,
ATTORNEY AND COUNSELLOR AT LAW."

Upon a baize-covered table he spread his writing apparatus, with a few books and such loose pamphlets and periodicals as wouldn't stand up endwise on his shelves, which latter were conspicuously posted, and presented the appearance of being well filled —the best bound volumes being exposed, while the curtains carelessly hid from view those that were not there. Determined to be Jef. Jenkins no longer, but to sustain the character of Thomas Jefferson Jenkins, Esq., in a becoming manner, he at once assumed an air of proper professional dignity, and mingling but

little with the most reputable men in the village, kept the crowd at such respectful distance as to avoid all risk of incurring the penalty of that maxim, which, to relieve it of its triteness, has been rendered—"too much familiarity breeds despise."

Of course the advent of such a young gentleman, in such a village, was a matter of considerable interest to the inhabitants, and served for a theme of speculation, wonderment, and inquiry, for many weeks. The men desired to know whether he was a Clarke or Troupe-man—the old ladies wondered if he was rich, and the young ladies thought he wasn't handsome "a bit." Some were curious to know whether he was "any relation to the Jenkinses of ——," and whether his family were *respectable;* but the question never once entered their heads whether the young man possessed any claim to their consideration on his own account. Be it said, however, to the honour of Pineville, these latter querists comprised but a meager portion of the community, consisting only of a limited circle of would-be aristocracy, who, destitute of intrinsic merit themselves, affect to despise it in others, while they bestow all honour upon mere fortuitous advantages, which fools may inherit and ignorance acquire.

Such a sign-board as our hero's had never before been exhibited in Pineville, and there was much speculation among the children and negroes, as to what the stranger had to sell; and it was not unfrequently that he was disturbed in his studies by inquiries for salt, iron, molasses, or some other of the leading articles, by people from the country, who

had never dreamed of a "'squire's office having a sign to it." But when our hero appeared at the door, in his office gown, backed by such an array of books and papers, and blandly informed the inquirers that they were mistaken in the place, that his was a law-office, and directed them across the street, where they would find whatever they wanted in the grocery line, the intruders left him with feelings akin to awe, and thereafter lost no opportunity of adding their mite to the current gossip about the strange young gentleman. It was rarely that 'Squire Jenkins was seen in the street in the day, and while the young men of the town held their nightly court about the hotel door, to talk over the news of the day, and regale themselves with idle jokes and anecdotes, he sought the companionship of his books, and often when the last villager retired to rest, the light of the young 'squire's solitary lamp still shone from his office windows.

By these and various other wise expedients, Thomas Jefferson Jenkins, Esq., managed to keep a good head of public opinion in his favour. But what of that, if it did not "bring grist to his mill?" Popularity would not pay board-bills and washerwomen, and he began to apprehend a crisis in his affairs, unless he could fall upon some expedient whereby to replenish his finances. Thomas was a practical philosopher, and was not given to hope against reason —he knew that manna had not rained from heaven within his recollection, and he had no more idea of fees falling into his pocket by chance than he had of being made chief justice within the year. Thus

far he had not had a client. True he had been applied to for advice in a few simple cases, and had drawn a few instruments of writing, such as deeds, bills of sale, and notes of hand, for his neighbours, but these slight services had been solicited of him in a neighbourly way, by persons who did not expect to pay any thing just for a sheet of paper and a few minutes' labour, and he was under the necessity of docketing such services under the head of "one good turn deserves another"—which, with most people, means,—"when you don't intend to pay your money, it is expedient to discount your benevolence."

But, as we have intimated, Thomas Jefferson Jenkins's finances were getting alarmingly low—the fare at his landlord's table began to taste as if it wasn't paid for, his best coat was becoming threadbare at the elbows, and his slumbers were nightly disturbed by apparitions of haggard washerwomen, extending their shrivelled hands, and with shrill discordant voices demanding payment for that last dozen; and every day but settled the conviction deeper and deeper in his mind, that some means *must* be speedily adopted to bring him into a more lucrative practice. Long hours he sat cross-legged in his arm-chair, and with chin in rest, mused over the cheerless prospect, and yet no ray of promise dawned upon his desponding hopes. He would have suffered a moderate battery of his own person for the privilege of making out the case in court, and was sorely tempted to commit some breach of law himself, in the hope that by his defence he might create a diversion in his favour.

In this painful perplexity of mind, as was natural

enough for a young man of his temperament, Thomas Jefferson Jenkins, Esq., contracted a habit of —— whittling! which led him to frequent the large white-pine box, which Mr. Harley, in accordance with the universal custom of country merchants, had placed in front of his store-door, for the accommodation of the whittling loafers of the village. One afternoon, while sitting upon the aforesaid box, all the faculties of his mind engaged in serious deliberation as a committee of ways and means, and his knife running freely into the soft pine, his attention was arrested by the whickering and restive movements of a little half starved, sway-backed, blind poney, that stood by the horse-rack, attached to a small cart, in which were a few small paper bundles and a large stone jug, stopped with a corn-cob. The establishment belonged to one Josiah Perkins, of Ticklegizzard settlement, who, in company with his wife and two or three of his neighbours, had visited town that day, on a trafficking expedition. Their stock in trade, consisting of a few dozen eggs, as many pounds of butter, and a few quarts of whortleberries, had been disposed of, and their proceeds expended in the purchase of sundry articles of prime necessity, such as homespun, rum and tobacco, and the party were now mustering for the purpose of taking their departure for home. But Si Perkins, as he was familiarly called, was missing, and while his wife was in anxious search of him, Boss Ankles and Bill Sweeny, who comprised the balance of the party, were busily engaged ir talking politics, over a half-pint in the measure, which Mr. Harley had judiciously thrown out as a bait for their future trade.

Desperate cases prompt desperate remedies—and though it was not easy to surmise in what way advantage could possibly accrue from such an expedient, our hero conceived a mischievous design upon the innocent and unsuspecting poney, which he resolved at once to put in execution, trusting to chance and his own ingenuity to turn the consequences to the advancement of his own especial interests. Accordingly, he seized the first favourable opportunity —when the confusion of voices within was loudest— to conduct Si Perkins's marketing equipage, unobserved, to the rear of the store—then opening the large old-fashioned cellar-door, he backed horse and cart into the cellar, and hastily throwing into the cart a few of the first articles upon which he could lay his hands, reascended, closed and fastened the door after him, and quietly resumed his seat upon the box.

He had not been long reseated when Si Perkins—who had been discovered by his wife at the grocery on the opposite side of the square, while in the act of negotiating the preliminaries of a fight about the Troupe treaty—made his appearance and passed into the store to take a parting leave of Mr. Harley. But Mr. Harley had stepped out, and it was while waiting that gentleman's return, that the observant Mrs. Perkins made the astounding discovery that the "cretur" was gone!

"Thar, now, Si," said she, "you see what comes of your projectin' about town, when you ought to be gwine home. The horse and cart is done gone, and every thing in it!"

Si hastened to the door, and raising his slouched

hat from his eyes, took a brief survey of the street in every direction—then turning to his wife, with a countenance expressive of the most painful anxiety, he inquired—

"Did you put the sperits in, Nancy?"

"To be sure I did, and the truck, too," replied his wife.

"Well, now!" exclaimed Si—"you *is* done it!—here's a business! But that's always the way with you—there's everlastin'ly something happenin' whenever——"

"Si Perkins!" exclaimed the little sharp-visaged woman, darting at him a glance from her small black eyes, that would have dislocated every bone in his body had he not been accustomed to its infliction. "Yes," she resumed after a pause, during which Si's heart ceased to beat, "you better hush layin' it on me!—I wonder if I wasn't trampoosin' all over the place to find you—and whar was you when I found you?—round to that 'bominable grocery, tryin' to kick up a fight 'long with Bill Pilcher—and you may thank me that you's got eyes left in yer dratted head to look for yer blind horse!"

That speech was enough for Si, considering its source, and he at once set about searching for the missing horse and cart. The balance of the Tickle-gizzard party, bearing in mind that there was a jug of rum in the case, were prompt to lend their aid.

Away they scattered in every direction, inquiring of everybody they met if they had "seed any thing of a blind horse and cart, with a jug in it?" But all their efforts were vain,—they could get no tidings

of the objects of their search, and one after another they returned to the store, to report the result of their investigations and to take counsel as to what course was best to be pursued. Mr. Harley, who had returned in the mean time, was of opinion that the animal had gone home, and that there was no occasion for giving themselves any further uneasiness about the matter.

But Si Perkins knew better than that—

"Who ever hearn," said he, "of a blind horse gwine home, six miles, all alone by himself?"

"That's a fact," remarked Boss Ankles, "it aint in natur for 'em to do it, no more'n it was for my hat and shoes to went off by 'emselves that time. Somebody's tuck that horse, Si Perkins, you may depend."

"Yes," added Bill Sweeny, "and that licker's as clear a gone as ever was."

"But who upon yeath could went and stol'd 'em right here in broad daylight, 'thout nobody seein' 'em?"

"Never you mind that," said Boss Ankles, "ther's plenty of meanery and shecoonery in this town to do any thing."

Just at this stage of the deliberations, our hero, who had been all the while intently engaged in carving the pine-box upon which he sat, affected to overhear the conversation of the anxious group that was assembled near the store-door, and to become interested in the subject of their investigation. Approaching them he inquired—

"Was it a little sun-burnt sorrel horse?"

"Yes!" answered two at once.

"With a bobtail?"

"Yes!"

"In a small cart with a new body?"

"Yes, with a jug in it," answered a trio of voices, while the whole party gazed with eager expectation into the face of the interrogator.

"Well," said our hero, "I saw such a horse and cart standing hitched to that rack, not more than fifteen minutes ago, and my opinion is that the horse could not have got loose without help."

"To be sure it couldn't," remarked Si, "for I hung him hard and fast, myself."

"But even if he might have got loose," resumed our hero, "it is not probable that he could have got out of sight so quick."

"That's a fact, said Boss Ankles, and we've looked all over town for 'em."

"But, gentlemen, did you follow the track of the cart?—that would, if taken in time, most certainly lead you to your property."

"Well, bless my soul!" exclaimed Perkins, "why didn't we think of that before! Come on, boys—the 'squire's got more sense than all of us put together—come on, and we'll soon see whar old Button's been tuck to."

The next minute the whole party were pursuing the track of the cart, which they trailed round to Mr. Harley's back lot, through the gate into the yard, and up to the cellar-door. In another minute the door was opened, and Si Perkins had just succeeded in urging his half-famished tuckey up the steps, when Mr. Harley's clerk, who was in the back room at

"Stop that cart! you infernal scoundrel!" exclaimed Mr. Harley.

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the time, attracted by the noise, thrust his head out at the window, and saw the cart driving away from the cellar with certain articles of unsold merchandise. Shocked beyond measure at such a high-handed proceeding, Mr. Van Scoik rushed into the front store exclaiming—

"Mr. Harley! Mr. Harley! do you think them Ticklegizzard people aint out in the back lot, carrying off our goods by the cart-load!"

"The d—l they are!" exclaimed Mr. Harley, leaping over the counter and hastening out, followed by his clerk and the few persons that were in the store.

Our hero joined to see the fun, secretly exulting at the success of his scheme, and whispering to himself—

"Now whether he *sue* Perkins,
Or Perkins him, or each do *sue* the other,
Every way makes my gain!"

The party with the horse and cart were making their way across the yard to the street, when the astonished merchant and his friends came upon them.

"Stop that cart! you infernal scoundrel!" exclaimed Mr. Harley.

Si would have stopped the speaker's mouth with his fist, but that it required the active employment of both his hands to guide the movements of his affrighted nag. However, his tongue was free, and with it he gave Mr. Harley as good as he sent, until the latter ordered his clerk to seize the reins of the animal. This movement caused others on both

sides to interfere, and a scuffle ensued, in which, amid a torrent of oaths and imprecations, the cart was overturned, Mr. Harley's face badly scratched and some of his hair pulled out by Mrs. Perkins, Mr. Van Scoik's spectacles broken across his nose, and other slight damages done to sundry persons. It is uncertain how the affair would have ended, had it not been for the timely arrival of 'Squire Rogers, who promptly commanded the peace.

"Oh, yes," exclaimed Si, as he and his friends were busied in righting the cart—"dadfetch your everlastin' picter—you was certain they was gone home, was you?—and you wouldn't give yourself no more trouble about 'em. You oudacious old swindlin' cus! But I'll have the law of you—I'll show you how to steal people's horses and carts agin!"

Mr. Harley, still panting from the effect of his encounter with the woman, stood in a sort of bewilderment, pointing to the articles which lay strewed upon the ground—

"Just look," said he, "at the bacon and things that scoundrel was carrying off!"

"Oh, yes! you old thief-o'-thunder, you needn't try to turn it off that-a-way. I always thought you wasn't none too good to steal, but now I've got pint blank proof agin you."

"Well, I always had a good opinion of Mr. Harley, though I have hearn a deal of talk about him," said Boss Ankles. "But this looks monstrous 'spicious, that's a fact."

"Oh, I'll give my Bible affydavy that he stold

the horse and cart, and hid 'em, and wouldn't tell whar they was," added Bill Sweeny.

"Yes," said Mrs. Perkins, "and he ought to go to the penitentiary this very minit—the old squinch owl—so he ought."

While Mr. Harley and his clerk were busied in removing the bacon and other articles that had been taken from the cellar, the Perkins party regained the street, where, after a brief consultation, it was determined to prosecute Mr. Harley for stealing, and, in order to prevent any miscarriage in the business, to employ the young 'squire, of whose sagacity they had recently had such convincing proof, to conduct the case.

Accordingly, a warrant was issued by 'Squire Rogers, summoning Absalom Harley forthwith to appear before him, to answer to the charge of larceny, upon the complaint of Josiah Perkins.

There had been a dearth of incident in Pineville for some time, and the various exaggerated reports of the affair that had given rise to the prosecution—which soon spread throughout the town—had the effect to assemble a considerable concourse of people at the magistrate's office to witness the proceedings. Like most men, Mr. Harley had his enemies as well as friends, and, as is usually the case in small villages, friends and foes took opposite sides, and the matter began to assume the character of a party question. While some were shocked beyond measure at the proceeding, and did not hesitate to express the opinion that Perkins was himself the thief, an equal number were as ready to credit the accusa-

tion against Mr. Harley; in which opinion their judgments were fortified by the sudden recollection of numerous transactions in the past history of that gentleman, which they never *had* been able to reconcile with their own notions of honesty and fair dealing.

But to proceed with the case of

STATE *vs.* ABSALOM HARLEY.

Mr. Harley having made his appearance, and the witnesses being all in attendance, 'Squire Rogers proceeded with due formality to make the necessary preparations for entering upon the discharge of his official duties. Having arranged his books and papers (comprising a Digest of the Laws of Georgia, a copy of the Bible, an Almanac for the year, and a half-quire of foolscap paper) upon the table before him, he wiped his spectacles with his handkerchief, and placed them deliberately astride of his nose—then assuming an air of judicial gravity, for which his face was most admirably adapted,—and which, in the honest man's opinion, was a highly important function of the magisterial office,—he ordered Snipe, the constable, to bring a fresh pitcher of water—after which he announced that he was ready to proceed in the investigation of the case.

At the request of the magistrate, Thomas Jefferson Jenkins, Esq.,—who, with a considerable number of legal books, occupied one end of the 'squire's table—rose and read the warrant. Mr. Harley listened with an air of incredulous unconcern, which by the unprejudiced, was considered as strongly in

dicative of his innocence, but which the opposite party regarded as the brazen-faced insolence of case-hardened guilt.

"Absalom Harley," said 'Squire Rogers in a very solemn and imposing manner, "you have hearn the charge agin you—is you got any answer to make to this court?"

Mr. Harley was about to speak, but, unfortunately for him, could not resist a laugh at the ludicrous position in which he found himself. Such conduct would have prejudiced a better cause—

"Silence in court!" exclaimed the outraged magistrate. Then leaning forward and gazing fiercely in the face of the prisoner, until his eyes became green with venom, he continued—"Is you laughin' at this court, sir?—this court didn't come here, sir, to be laughed at, not by no kinds of character, sir. This court are the law of the land, sir—and no kind of character whatsomever has a right to make game of the law, sir——"

"Why, Rogers, I'm——"

"This court aint name Rogers, sir—this court don't know nobody but the law—this court are a regular constitootional authority, and aint irresponsible to nobody but justice and the laws of Georgia."

"But I meant no disrespect to——"

"Silence, sir—this court don't disrespect nobody out of the law—this court, sir, are a court, and don't know who's guilty till they prove themselves innocent according to law, for this court are blind out of the law, and don't know nothing."

"That's a fact," interrupted Harley, adding in

an under-tone—"and it is useless to multiply words, for this court are a d—d fool!"

"Is you gwine to answer the question of this court?" peremptorily demanded the 'squire, too much enraged to hear the concluding remark of the prisoner. "Is you guilty or not guilty?"

"Of course I'm not guilty," replied Harley, who by this time had come to understand that he had nothing to expect from "this court," but what he might be entitled to under its strictest construction of the law; and he now began to feel some degree of solicitude in a matter which he had at first regarded as utterly ridiculous.

"Well, sir, we'll see about that," said the 'squire, in a severe tone. "'Squire Jinkins, you may proceed with the case."

All eyes were immediately turned upon the young lawyer, who, rising gracefully from his seat, after a slight effort to clear his throat, proceeded to open the case. The angry altercation that had just taken place, had served to show him the weak side of the official dignitary whose favourable regard it was of such vital importance he should gain, and he had like to have commenced his address with "most potent, grave, and reverend seignor," but apprehending that he might possibly overcharge the old gentleman's vanity, he contented himself with less magniloquent phrase—

"May it please this very honourable court," remarked our hero, "this is a case of simple larceny, in which my client, Mr. Josiah Perkins, a worthy citizen of this county, appears as prosecutor against

Absalom Harley, merchant of this place. The particular circumstances of the larceny, we will, with your honour's permission, proceed more fully to set forth and substantiate to the satisfaction of this honourable court, by good and sufficient testimony. Your honour will please to swear Mr. William Sweeny, Mr. Boss Ankles, Mr. Josiah Perkins, and Mrs. Nancy Perkins."

'Squire Rogers rose from his seat with the stately gravity of a high-chancellor, and, after instructing the witnesses with which hand, and how they should hold the book, administered the oath in the most solemn and impressive manner. Si Perkins and Bill Sweeny grasped the volume firmly and kissed it resolutely, while Boss Ankles, whose lips had, perhaps, never before come in so close contact with truth, but had often sipped from Mr. Harley's pint measure, turned quite pale and cast his eyes to the floor. Mrs. Perkins had been in a pet all afternoon, and saluted the "calfskin" as a toad catches flies—so quick that few saw the operation.

The prosecutor was then examined.

"Mr. Perkins," said our hero, "you will now please to state to this honourable court, all the particulars in relation to this transaction."

"'Zactly, 'squire, that's jest what I want to do. Well, you must know that Nancy was wantin' some little fineries, and the childer's clothes was gittin' monstrous raggedy, and——"

"Please confine yourself, Mr. Perkins, to the matter under consideration," interrupted the prosecutor's counsel.

"Jes so, 'squire, that's what I'm comin' to—and the baby had the rickets, and wanted some doctor's stuff, so Nancy was at me for up'ards of a week to put Button in the cart and come to town with her, and——"

"Very well, Mr. Perkins, after you came to town, you went to Mr. Harley's store to trade?"

"To be sure we did, and bought a heap o' truck, and some things he did stick it to us monstrous in the price, and Nancy said to me, ses she——"

"Never mind what Nancy said, Mr. Perkins. Where were your horse and cart while you were trading with Mr. Harley?"

"Bless your soul, they was right out before the door, tied hard and fast to the horse-rack. But I jest want to tell you what a audacious rascal he is. Ses Nancy to me, ses she, 'Si——'"

"Never mind, Mr. Perkins, we will endeavour to make that appear presently. When did you first miss your horse and cart?"

"Well, you see, after we was done buyin' the things, I went over to the grocery a bit, to see Sam Culpepper, 'bout a pair o' plough-lines what his nigger feller borried last spring, and——"

"Very well, that's enough about the plough-lines. But when you came back——"

"'Zactly, when I come back to the store, drat the horse and cart was to be seen anywhar about—and Nancy, she come after me to go home, and ses she to me, 'Now, Si——'"

"This court can't hear *what* Nancy said!" interrupted 'Squire Rogers, turning abruptly to the witness.

"Well," resumed Si, raising his voice to the highest possible pitch—"Nancy ses to me, ses she, there, now——"

"Silence! shet your mouth!" commanded the enraged magistrate—"This court's got as good ears as any man, but they aint for to hear no old woman's gabblement, 'thout its under oath."

"But 'squire, I thought——"

"Hush your mouth, I tell you! You haint got no business to think in court. This court don't qualify no witness to think. Now, sir, go on with yer state*ment*, and don't be a circumlocutin' all over God's yeath, or this court 'll find a way to subtract the truth from you, sir."

"His honour is right," resumed our hero. "A witness should confine himself to facts only. You will, therefore, proceed, Mr. Perkins, to inform this honourable court, in as brief manner as possible, how and where you recovered your property."

"Which?" inquired the mortified prosecutor.

"Please inform his honour where you found the horse and cart."

"Why, down in Ab. Harley's cellar."

"Did Mr. Harley show them to you?"

"That he didn't. He said he didn't know no thing about 'em, but 'lowed they was gone home, and after I and Ankles and Sweeny looked everywhar for 'em and couldn't find 'em nowhar, we tuck the track of the cart, and follered it right up to the cellar-door."

"Was the door closed?"

"Well, it was. It was shet down tight, and the

iron bar put over the thing what holds it, but it wasn't locked."

"Well, what followed, Mr. Perkins?"

"Why, jest as soon as me and Sweeny opened the door, old Button he whickered at us, and I went down and brung him out, and we was carryin' him out of the yard, when here comes old Harley and that long-legged feller, Van Squoik, and kicked up a terrible rumpus, and skeered the horse, and upset the cart, and like to mashed every thing all to flinders."

"Do you live in this county, Mr. Perkins?"

"Yes, sir, all my life."

"Where and when did this transaction take place?"

"Why, over thar at the store, not more'n a hour ago."

"Very well, Mr. Perkins, you may stand aside."

The substance of his testimony having been written down by his counsel, it was duly subscribed to and reaffirmed by the prosecutor, after which it was submitted to the honourable court.

Mrs. Nancy Perkins was next examined.

"You will please to state, Mrs. Perkins," said the counsel for the prosecutor, "what occurred to-day at Mr. Harley's store, after you had concluded your purchases."

"Why," remarked the little sharp-visaged woman, in a peculiarly rapid and emphatic manner, "after, the things, was all done, wrapped up, and, paid for, Si, he 'lowed, he'd, jest step across, the square, a bit, while I, put 'em, all in, the cart, and, got ready,

to go home. Well, after he was gone, Mr. Harley's man (now, I'm jest a-gwine to tell, the whole bisness, jest as it was,) he tuck Ankles, and Sweeny, into the back room, and, gin 'em some licker, and, thar they was, drinkin', and runnin on, with all manner, of nonsense, while I, waited, and waited, for Si, till, I was, completely, done out. Bimeby, Mr. Harley, he 'lowed, I'd better, go after Si, if I wanted him, to go home, to-night; so I went, and, found him, over, to the grocery, and, when we come back, the horse, and cart, was gone, and, after we, looked, everywhar, for 'em, we found 'em, hid away, in, Mr. Harley's cellar. And, that's, the whole, truth, about it."

Sweeny's testimony fully corroborated that of the prosecutor, and though Ankles was more cautious than the rest, and was extremely careful to state nothing positively, but only "according to the best of his knowledge and belief," the weight of his evidence went to strengthen the presumption against the prisoner.

Mr. Harley declined asking the witnesses any questions, and having none to adduce in his own behalf, he relied for his defence solely upon the deficiency in the evidence as made out by the prosecutor. He reminded the honourable court that there was no evidence before it that implicated him in the slightest degree, and expressed a confident hope, that though false statements had been made under oath, by the prosecutor, for the purpose of covering his own guilt, no one in the community in which he had lived for many years, would

believe him guilty of the charge preferred against him.

There was a moment of breathless silence, while our hero was arranging his notes and authorities preparatory to making his maiden speech. 'Squire Rogers condescendingly turned his benign countenance upon him, as he thus addressed the court—

"May it please your honour—I doubt not but that your honour has participated with me in the utter astonishment with which I have listened to the defence set up in this case,—if, indeed, it may be called a defence. I am as yet young in the practice of the law, but I trust, sir, that if I should, like your honour, live to grow gray in legal experience, I will never again witness such a miserable exhibition in a court of justice. Why, sir, what is the defence relied on in this case?—simply the alleged inconclusiveness of the testimony on the part of the prosecution. And let us see what this testimony is. We have proven, by three respectable witnesses, that the horse and cart of my client were at a certain time standing before the prisoner's door, that he decoyed two of the witnesses into the back room of his store, and afterwards persuaded the other witness to go in search of her husband—that while she was absent the horse and cart were taken, and that after the prisoner had denied all knowledge of them, they were traced to his cellar, where they were found, secreted away out of sight. Now, I would ask your honour, what further testimony, short of positive proof of the actual caption, would the prisoner have us introduce into this court, in order to

establish his guilt? But, may it please your honour, I am willing to throw aside all these concurrent circumstances—in themselves more than sufficient to establish the larceny,—and rest the validity of my client's cause simply upon the fact of the *possession*, under the circumstances in which we have shown it to this honourable court. By reference to the books we will find that, *ita lex scripta est*—To constitute the offence of larceny, it is necessary that there should be a caption and asportation, with a felonious intention, of the goods of another. Now, may it please your honour, the *possession* of goods or chattels, which have been taken from another person having a right to them, without his consent, and unaccounted for, is *prima facie* evidence of the caption and asportation, with felonious intent. In other words, if a man be in *possession* of goods or chattels under such circumstances, the law requires him to account for his possession, which it thus regards as presumptive evidence of larceny, applying the maxim, "*stabitur presumptioni donec probitur in contrarium.*" (Here the honourable court's mouth unconsciously dropped open to its fullest extent.) And if he fail to account for this possession by other testimony than his own, he must be convicted. This sort of presumption, may it please your honour, is more or less strong, according as the possession is more or less recent. The more recent the possession, the stronger the case. For these well-established principles of law, I need hardly refer this intelligent court to East's Pleas of the Crown, 656; Hale's Pleas of the Crown, 290; 2 Starkie on Evi-

dence, 840; Addison's Reports, 320; Archbold's Practice, 76, and numerous other learned authorities. Nor need I occupy the time of this honourable court by applying these principles to the case under consideration. I will, may it please your honour, only remark in conclusion, that we have abundantly proven the *possession* of our property by the defendant without our knowledge or consent, and as he has utterly failed to account for that possession, this honourable court is bound to presume that he took the property *animo furandi*, and to commit him accordingly."

If there were any doubts resting on the mind of 'Squire Rogers before, this speech, so replete with complimentary allusions to "his honour's" sagacity, and abounding with legal terms so utterly beyond his comprehension, had the effect to disperse them at once, and to irrevocably fix his conviction of the prisoner's guilt.

After a moment's silence, during which 'Squire Rogers looked unusually wise, he thus delivered the judgment of the court.

"Absalom Harley, you is committed by this court, to the amount of five hundred dollars for your appearance to the next honourable Superior Court."

While this decision gave evident satisfaction to a large number of the persons present, there were yet some who regarded it as wholly unjust, notwithstanding the able arguments of counsel. And as Mr. Harley had before intimated his intention of prosecuting Perkins, he was now strenuously urged to do so, by his friends, who suggested that as he

had fallen under the displeasure of the magistrate, his true policy would be to employ the young lawyer—who, it was evident to all, had won a high place in "his honour's" favourable regard—to conduct the suit.

It required much persuasion to induce Mr. Harley to adopt this latter suggestion. After what had just taken place, he felt much more like seeing Thomas Jefferson Jenkins, Esq., "to the d—l," as the saying is, than giving him a fee. But, on being reminded of the utter hopelessness of his case unless he should succeed in overcoming the prejudices of 'Squire Rogers, and being assured by uncle Hearty, that "Lawyers is like shot-guns, and hits whoever they's pinted at, 'thout any malice prepens," he waived his objection, and consented to employ the same weapon against Perkins which that individual had so successfully directed against himself. Accordingly, through his friends, he approached our hero on the subject, who he found not only perfectly willing to advise him in his case, but, as he expressed it, extremely happy to have an opportunity thus afforded him of proving to Mr. Harley, the total absence of any thing like feelings of personal hostility, on his part, towards him.

After hearing the evidence upon which Mr. Harley relied to sustain the prosecution, our hero remarked that the *gist* of the action was unquestionably the same in both cases, and that though it was not usual in the practice, for a gentleman of his profession to prosecute his own client, and by doing so he might possibly expose himself to the unjust sarcasm, "*ira*

et verba locunt," yet, under the circumstances, he did not think that his opinion, given *super subjectam materiam*, in the first case, ought to operate as a bar to prevent his acceptance of a fee in the one now about to be brought; adding, that he had not a doubt but that he could, from the evidence, convict the whole Ticklegizzard party of the offence of *larceny from the house!* Mr. Harley was delighted at the prospect of wreaking his vengeance upon those who had sworn so lustily against him, but conscientiously reminded his counsel that the goods were taken from the *cellar*—to which our hero replied, that that fact was perfectly immaterial to the issue.

Accordingly, while 'Squire Rogers was transcribing the form of a bond from the Georgia Justice, in the case of "The State *vs.* Harley," our hero was busily engaged in drafting the necessary papers in the new prosecution.

Immediately upon the decision of their case, the Ticklegizzard party had withdrawn, in boisterous triumph, to their cart, where, with numerous friends, they made a desperate attack upon the contents of the stone jug. Si Perkins, who was unusually elated on the occasion, made a speech from his cart-body.

"Boys," said he, "I can jest tell you what it is—that 'Squire Jinkins is a leetle bit the smartest man in these parts! Did you ever *hear* sich a speech? And the way he knows the law from old Moses up, is perfectly 'mazin'. Why, he can talk more sense in a minute than old Rogers can understand in a coon's age. And what's more, he's my

candydate for the next legislater, agin old Nippers or anybody else. Hurra for Jinkins!"

"Three cheers for Jinkins!" shouted the crowd unanimously. "Hurra! hurra!! hurra!!!"

"Stop, boys, for a sentiment!" exclaimed Bill Sweeny, with the jug in his hand. "I give you old Ab. Harley—

> He thought he was monstrous smart,
> To steal Si Perkins's horse and cart—
> But lawyer Jinkins has tuck him into tow,
> And now to the penitentiary he will go!"

A loud hurra followed the delivery of Bill Sweeny's impromptu, which had not entirely died away, when Constable Snipe made his appearance in their midst, with the warrant for Perkins, Ankles, and Sweeny—Mrs. Perkins having been omitted by courtesy of the prosecutor.

The summons of the 'squire came upon them like a clap of thunder out of a clear sky, and their hearts quaked with fear while the shout of triumph yet lingered upon their lips. The jug was immediately called in, the corn-cob replaced in its neck, and the party, attended by their astonished friends, repaired to the magistrate's office. 'Squire Rogers's surprise at the strange proceeding had, after our hero's brief explanation, somewhat subsided, and he was prepared to receive the new culprits with his wonted calm and dignified composure of manner.

After some little preliminary arrangement, "his honour" announced that he was ready to proceed in the investigation of the case of

STATE *vs.* JOSIAH PERKINS, WILLIAM SWEENY, AND BOSS ANKLES.

The proceedings were formally opened by the reading of Mr. Harley's affidavit, to which the prisoners listened in utter amazement, and when the usual question was propounded, they unanimously declared themselves "not guilty of no sich doin's." But what was their surprise and consternation, when they beheld their late counsel, Si Perkins's own candidate for the legislature, rise and state the case on behalf of the prosecution—

"This, may it please your honour," said our hero, "is a case of Larceny from the House, which differs from the case which has just been so ably decided by your honour, only in a single feature. In this case the goods were taken from the enclosure of the prosecutor. Though this circumstance alters the grade of the offence, the principles of law by which the case is to be decided are precisely the same, and if we can establish the *possession* before this honourable court, by good and sufficient testimony, it will then devolve upon the prisoners to account for that possession, in default of which we will be entitled to a commitment. We will now, may it please your honour, introduce testimony to prove—1st, the possession by Perkins, and 2d, the participation of Ankles and Sweeny in the felony, as principals in the second degree. Your honour will please to qualify Absalom Harley, Eugenius Augustus Van Scoik, and Jonathan Hearty."

The witnesses being sworn, Mr. Harley was first examined.

Prosecutor's Testimony.—"Prisoners had been trading at witness's store—when witness returned from the post-office, understood that prisoners had lost their cart—saw no more of them for some time—was selling Mr. Hearty a pair of suspenders when clerk informed him that prisoners were in the back yard carrying off his goods—witness ran out to stop them—met them coming with the cart from the cellar—prisoners were all in company—ordered Perkins to stop—prisoner refused, and Sweeny said he would break witness's d—d old bald pate if he touched the cart—there were several sides of bacon, one coil of bale-rope, two pieces of bagging, and one iron tea-kettle in the cart at the time, all the property of witness—when clerk caught the bridle of the horse, Ankles and Sweeny interfered—the cart was overturned, and witness recovered his property with great difficulty—the transaction occurred to-day, in this county—witness is a citizen of this county."

The testimony of both the other witnesses fully corroborated the statement of the prosecutor. On the part of the defence, the prisoners adhered to their former statement, denying any knowledge of the goods alleged to have been stolen.

Counsel for Prosecution.—"May it please this honourable court, as it is growing late I will occupy your honour's time but a few minutes in arguing a case which, I doubt not your honour will agree with me, is too plain to admit of argument. I will only remark that in this, as in the former case, the possession proven is not satisfactorily accounted for by the testimony of the prisoners; which, in the

absence of positive proof, the law holds to be presumptive evidence of the felonious intention. The fact that the prisoner Perkins *might* have gone down into our cellar to recover his horse, does not authorize the presumption that he gathered up our goods and carried them off in his cart by mistake; nor is the *asportation* in the slightest degree purged by the subsequent surrender or abandonment of the goods, even though the possession was but momentary. (See 1 Hawkins, c. 33; Leach, 267; Hale, 533.) However, not doubting but that your honour will at once perceive the striking similitude of the cases, so far as the *possession* is relied on, I will leave your honour to adopt the maxim, *res judicata pro veritate accipitur*, and pass to the other branch of the testimony, by which we seek to involve the prisoners, Ankles and Sweeny, as principals in the second degree. A principal in the second degree, may it please your honour, is a person who is present aiding and abetting the fact to be done, and in the proof it is only necessary to show that he was near enough to lend his assistance in any manner to the commission of the offence. (See 2 Starkie on Evidence, 6; Hale's Pleas of the Crown, 615.) Now, may it please your honour, we have shown the prisoners not only to have been present at the time, but, by their own admission, to have been *actively assisting* the principal, Perkins, in the commission of the larceny. We, therefore, most confidently ask of this honourable court, the commitment of the prisoners.'

'Squire Rogers mustered up his sluggish intellect

and took a profound view of the case. It *did* look like a rather wholesale business to commit both parties. But the evidence was conclusive, and after the law had been so ably expounded, he felt that it would be sinning against light and knowledge to give any other judgment in the case, than that so confidently asked of "his honour," by the young prodigy of legal knowledge who had conducted the prosecutions. Accordingly, the prisoners were duly committed.

By this decision our hero won new laurels. The Harley party were not less extravagant in their applause than the Ticklegizzard party had been, and now all parties joined in extolling his talents, and in pronouncing him unquestionably the ablest lawyer in the state. True, the sudden change in relationship which had taken place, had the effect to somewhat abate the ardour of Si Perkins's friendship —but if he loved "'Squire Jinkins" less, he feared him more, which, with him, was an impulse quite as strong, and subjected him even more readily to the controlling influence of our hero.

With some little difficulty, the Ticklegizzard party were enabled to obtain bail; after which, they pushed the war upon the brown jug to the death, and then started for home, in a glorious flow of spirits.

Thus matters rested until near the time for the sitting of the Superior Court, when both parties began to feel a little uneasy, and both applied to 'Squire Jenkins to defend them. But our hero magnanimously declined being retained on either

side, and not only re-established himself in the good opinion of both parties, but at the same time successfully covered his own intrigue, by setting on foot a negotiation for a reconciliation, which resulted in a mutual agreement not to prosecute—both parties conceding that there certainly must have been some mistake in the matter.

From the day of the trials, the name of Thomas Jefferson Jenkins, Esq., spread far and wide throughout the country, "a terror to all evil doers," and a "tower of strength" in almost every law case. Business came in from all sides, and fat fees rewarded his numerous triumphs. His politics were in the minority in the county, but by his influence his party soon gained the ascendancy, and, rising with it, his aspirations after political promotion were speedily gratified by a successful competition with Mr. Nippers for a seat in the Legislative Council of the state.

His talents——(did we hear the reader yawn?) "Then tell thou the tale," say we—but hadst thou not crossed us, thou shouldst have heard how he grew in the favour of the ladies—how the young ones admired and the old ones praised him—how he fell in love with a poor orphan girl, who had been swindled by her guardian out of a large estate —how he sued for and recovered the fortune and married the young lady—what a talk it made in Pineville—and how (after she had got her property) everybody thought she was handsome—and how the respectable people always knew that she had been brought up a lady,—and how happily 'Squire

Jenkins and Mrs. 'Squire Jenkins lived together—and how many and what beautiful children they had—" with many other things of worthy memory, which now shall die in oblivion, and thou return unexperienced to thy grave."

THE DUEL.

It was on a rainy September evening in the fall of 18—, that a group of men were seated round the cheerful bar-room fire of the Planters' Hotel. Among them were several from the country, who were detained in town by the inclemency of the weather, but the majority of the company was composed of citizens of Pineville. Uncle Hearty, who generally presided on such occasions, was present, and Sammy Stonestreet was there, to drink his share of the rum, and to indicate to the rest the laughing places in such stories as had become rather stale, or in which the humour was not easily detected by less experienced jokers.

The evening was well-nigh spent—notwithstanding the company evinced no inclination to disperse, while they freely mixed in conversation, and entertained each other with stories and anecdotes that ever and anon elicited loud bursts of laughter; the usual precursor of which was a shrill squeal from Sammy, who beat the floor with his cotton-stalk, by way of accompaniment. Sometimes Uncle Hearty only evinced his risibility by a sort of asthmatic wheeze in the throat, but when he rose above that, and broke forth into one of his good, old-fashioned, side-shaking laughs, the balance of the company

needed no better assurance that there was indeed something to laugh at, and unanimously joined in the chorus.

In the midst of this scene of social hilarity the street door was opened, and a tall, dark-complexioned man entered, and without ceremony seated himself in a conspicuous part of the room. He was at once recognised as no less a personage than Major Ferguson Bangs, and the customary salutation of "good evening, Major Bangs," was uttered by several at the same time. The person thus addressed made no reply; but, crossing his legs and cocking his hat with a most impudent inclination to one side of his head, contracted his thick, black brow, and, after gazing insolently round the room, fixed his fierce gaze upon the fire, and remained silent.

"Never mind, gentle*men*," said Sammy, "the major's got his high-heeled boots on to-night. Go on 'bout Gun Bustin gittin' into the waspses nest."

After the momentary interruption occasioned by the intrusion, the story of Gun Bustin and the wasps' nest was resumed, and Major Bangs left to indulge in his revery of thought, uninterrupted by any further address. As the speaker proceeded with his story, the major smiled a very incredulous smile, occasionally uttering a loud "ahem!"—and in the midst of the general laugh that followed its conclusion, he was heard to mutter something that had a "d—n" in it. But no notice was taken, by the company, either of the clearing of his throat or the muttering. At length the major's patience seemed to have become wearied, and he determined to adopt

some surer means of attracting attention. Accordingly, he turned abruptly round in his seat, and fixing his gaze steadfastly upon one who was relating an anecdote in which himself was a prominent actor, waited until the speaker drew to a close, when, as the laugh died away, he exclaimed aloud —"Doubts arising, sir!"

The major was no stranger to the speaker, and the remark was permitted to pass without notice.

But Major Ferguson Bangs was not to be foiled in his attempt to provoke a quarrel. He became more and more insolent, and seized upon every opportunity to interrupt and insult the speakers, by whistling upon a high key, and uttering such exclamations as—"Bah!"—"whew!"—"that'll do for the marines," and the like.

At length a few whispers were passed between some three or four of the party, and a well-known wag commenced an anecdote. Major Bangs directed his attention immediately to the speaker. As the latter concluded, the major bent upon him a look of most ineffable sarcasm, and exclaimed—"Bah!"

"I'd like to know what you mean by that insinewation, Major Bangs?" demanded Ned Jones.

"Doubts arising, sir!" exclaimed the major, with an oath.

"Doubt who, sir?"

"Doubts arising, sir!" reiterated the major in a fierce voice, as he gave his chair a whirl from under him and rose to his feet. "That's what I mean, sir! Take it up if you dare, sir! Do you know Major Ferguson Bangs, sir? Take care, young

man, how you play with the forked lightning! Whew!" and he gave his teeth a grind that was distinctly heard in every part of the room.

"I only axed what you meant, major—I don't want to git into no fuss," replied Ned, apparently half terrified out of his wits.

"Fuss!—bah! you asked what I meant. I've told you, sir. You can pocket it, sir—but don't know me the next time you see me. Do you understand, sir? None but gentlemen are permitted to know Major Bangs, sir."

Then pacing to and fro, the entire length of the room, the major complacently observed the effect of his blustering speech upon the crowd, and casting a searching look at the young man whom he had so rudely insulted, and who was now engaged in earnest consultation with several friends, in one corner of the room, he exclaimed in a haughty tone—

"I despise a slink!"

"Who do you call a slink?" demanded Jones.

"Every dog knows his own name when he hears it, sir," replied the major.

"But look here, mister, I'll let you know I aint no dog—and I aint gwine to put up with no more of your insolence, nether!"

"Insolence, sir! Thunder and furies, do you know who you are talking to, sir?"

"Yes, I'm talkin' to Major Bumblusterbus from Virginia, what got his horse's tail shaved at the Big Spring Barbecue, when he was so drunk he didn't know which eend to put the bridle on. That's who I'm talkin' to; and if he don't sing small, the fust

thing he'll know he'll git the worst lickin' he ever had in his life, rite here in this room."

As the speaker concluded he stripped off his coat and placed it in the hands of Sammy Stonestreet, who was now dancing about in an ecstasy of delight at the prospect of approaching hostilities, while Uncle Hearty was loud in his expostulations with the crowd.

"Now, boys—come major," said he, turning from one party to the other as he spoke, "do stop it now—whar's the use of kickin' up a rumpus this here time o'night—look here now—listen to your Uncle Hearty, and take his advice—he's older than you all is—come now, Neddy—come, major, let's all take a drink and drap it."

By this time—whether from the influence of Uncle Hearty's harangue, or some other cause, we will not pretend to say—the fiery major had become quite docile, while the other party only grew more and more hostile, until it required some three or four to hold him off.

"Whar is he?" shonted Jones; "jest let me light on him, if you want to see how slick Georgia kin top out old Virginy. Whoopee! I's the boy kin tame your forket lightnin's! I'm the kuja Dick! the big buck of the water! the Georgia stag! Whoopee!—don't hold me!"

"Oh, yes, sir, you've got your friends round you now, and you can talk big, sir. Major Bangs can be found when he's got his friends with him, sir, but he don't fight everybody, sir, nor in a bar-room, sir."

He was now joined by three or four of the party, who professed themselves his friends, and who ad-

vised him to challenge Ned Jones, which, they urged, would be much the most genteel way of settling the difficulty.

"Oh, he's beneath my notice," said the major—"I'll not dirty my fingers with him."

"That will never do, major," remarked Bill Peters—"they'll have it all over town before to-morrow morning, that Major Ferguson Bangs was backed out by Ned Jones, a man who everybody knows is the greatest coward that ever lived."

"Think I ought to call him out, eh, Peters?"

"To be sure I do; but I'm afraid there'll be no such thing as getting honourable satisfaction out of him—for I do believe he would quit the state before he'd fight."

"Well, sir, I'm of your opinion, sir,—I'll challenge him to-morrow."

"Now's the time to cut his comb, major."

"Challenge him right here, now?"

"Yes, and you'll see how he'll drop his feathers."

"Well, Peters, write out a challenge, and I'll blow him to the d—l, sir. How dare he call me Major Bumblusterbus,—a man belonging to one of the best Virginia families, sir—Bumblusterbus! That word will be the death of him, sir. Come, let's take some liquor, and then we'll fix the challenge."

Accordingly, Major Bangs, with those who claimed to be of his party, and our friend Sammy Stonestreet—who drank on this occasion as a neutral—stepped up to the bar, and, having drank "success," pen, ink, and paper were called for, and a challenge drawn in due form, which was borne by Peters to

the adverse party. The challenge was promptly accepted, seconds and friends appointed, and the hour fixed for the meeting, which was to take place on the following day, at ten o'clock in the morning, in an old field at a little distance from the town.

"Did he look scared?" asked the major of his second.

"That he did,—he turned pale as a sheet," replied Peters.

"Has he a family, Peters?"

"No."

"Well, that's fortunate, sir. I suppose he knows I'm a dead shot—a perfect liner, sir—cut the cross nine times in ten, on the word. But come, let's take some more liquor."

Uncle Hearty announced that it was "bed-time for all honest people," and, after exhorting "the boys" to go home and take a good nap, and try to get up in a better humour in the morning, that worthy old gentleman took his departure. Soon after the party broke up—the more peaceable members to seek their beds, while the major and his friends went in search of pistols, bullet-moulds, powder, and other necessary equipments, in the collection and preparation of which the balance of the night was spent.

Early on the following morning, Major Bangs was seen blustering through the streets of Pineville, with a pair of large duelling pistols under his arm, wrapped in a red silk handkerchief. His friends had managed to keep up the excitement by frequent libations during the night, and he was now "full of *valour* and distempering draughts."

"Do you think he'll show himself on the ground?" asked the major of his second,—"have you seen him this morning, sir?"

"No, indeed—the sun did not catch Ned Jones in the county, *this* morning, if he had time to get over the line before it rose."

"Do you think he has cut out, sure enough?"

"No doubt of it, major."

"Well, sir, I will have to post him as a coward, you know. But I'd rather do that than take his life, sir, and you know I'm a dead shot."

"To be sure you are, major, and a gentleman of honour."

"Of the Virginia stamp, Peters."

"Right," said Peters—"let's take some liquor."

Notwithstanding the strict injunction of secrecy, Sammy Stonestreet had spread the intelligence of the approaching duel over the whole town, and, long before the appointed hour, the best portion of the male population were on their way to the place of meeting, to witness the combat. As it drew near the time, the major and his friends repaired to the ground, where, greatly to his surprise, he beheld his antagonist quietly seated upon a log, awaiting his arrival. As Major Bangs observed Jones and his friends busied in preparing their arms, notwithstanding his inner man was well fortified with some half-dozen glasses of brandy and water, there was a sudden change in the expression of his countenance, and he turned to his friend and remarked—

"Why, Peters, there he sits, cool as a cucumber!"

"Sure enough!" replied Peters, with well-affected

surprise. "Well, major, it will save us the trouble of posting him, you know!"

The major was, just at this crisis, afflicted with a difficulty in swallowing, and before he had time to reply, one from the adverse party called out—

"Gentlemen, are you ready to lay off the ground?"

"Why, it aint time for that yet, is it, Peters?" asked the major in a tremulous undertone.

"Yes, sir, we on the part of Major Bangs, are ready," replied Peters, without answering the major's interrogatory.

"Peters," said the major, grasping him hard by the arm, and whispering in his ear—"let Dr. Jones step it off—he's got the longest legs—and tell him to straddle his best, for you see I'm death on a long shot."

The process of pacing off the ground was now performed with due formality. The pegs were driven, and the articles between the belligerant parties read. The principals were then called upon to cast lots for the choice of position. The major trembled like an aspen leaf, and his lips were colourless. The cool deliberation of his antagonist increased his own trepidation, and, like Bob Acres, he began to feel his valour "ooze out at the ends of his fingers."

"I'm told," said Peters, approaching with a loaded pistol, "that Jones is a dead shot on the third or fourth word—so, major, your best chance is to draw a quick bead."

"The h—ll he is!" gasped Bangs. "Why didn't you tell me that before, Peters?" continued he in a husky voice; "have you got any liquor?"

A bottle was produced, and the major made a heavy draw upon its contents.

"I'm not afraid to die, Peters," said he, as he handed back the bottle, and his filling eyes rolled wildly in their sockets, as if he were about to give up the ghost without a fire. "I aint afraid to die, but somehow I feel sort o' curious. But it's not because I'm afraid, Peters. There are some little matters that ought to be fixed first, and I'd like to live till my time comes. But," he continued, grasping his second by the hand, and vainly endeavouring to make a show of resolution—"you know Major Bangs, Peters——"

"To be sure. I know him to be a brave man, and a man of honour, who would rather die than be disgraced on the field by——"

"Right, Peters, right—toss up for choice."

Up went the dollar, and as it whirled in the air, the major called out—"Heads!"

"Heads it is!" exclaimed Peters. "The choice is ours, major."

There was little or no choice in the ground, so that the major found it a very difficult matter to decide. By the aid of his second he was at length enabled to make a selection, and, staggering to one of the pegs, took his position. Jones was on the ground in an instant—the seconds took their respective places, and the individual who had been appointed to give the word demanded—

"Are you ready, gentlemen?"

"Yes," answered Jones.

"No! stop!" yelled the major, scarce able to keep his feet.

"What's the matter?" asked Peters, approaching.

"Do you think Jones wouldn't make it up, Peters?" whispered the major.

"What, major! We, the challenging party, propose a compromise! That would never do, you know. There's no chance of an honourable adjustment of the matter now, unless they make the proposition to us. Remember, your *honour* is at stake, Major Bangs, your sacred honour."

This appeal was sufficient, though it was very evident that the major, like many others who have found themselves in a similar *honourable* position, would much rather have ventured his honour at stake than his foot at that peg.

"Right, Peters—tell 'em to go ahead," said he, concentrating his energies into one desperate effort to stand erect.

"Are you ready, gentlemen?"

"Yes," was the answer from both parties

"Fire! (bang) one, two, three, (bang) four, five—stop!"

Both pistols were discharged—Major Bangs's between the words "fire" and "one." After the discharge of his pistol he could no longer stand, but fell forward on both knees. A proposition was then made, at his request, for a reconciliation. But Jones was inexorable, swore that Bangs had attempted to dodge his fire, and that he would not leave the field until blood had been drawn.

"Load up again, boys," said he, in a voice loud

"After the discharge of his pistol he could no longer stand, but fell forward on both knees."

enough to be heard by Bangs, "I'll tap his demijon for him this time, now mind if I don't."

"If I had a thought he was such a blood-thirsty devil, I'd never challenged him," muttered the major. "I see it plain enough—I'm a dead man, Peters. The muzzle of his pistol is as large as the mouth of a Dutch oven, and he loads with buck-shot."

"Oh, no, major."

"I'm sure of it, Peters, for I heard 'em whiz about my head like a swarm of bumble-bees. But pass the bottle here, Peters, and I'll die like a man of honour."

Just at this juncture Jones's second advanced and desired to speak with Peters. The major, strong in the belief that a proposition for a reconciliation was at hand, drew himself up, and assumed a most valorous bearing—all the chivalric sentiment of his soul was pumped up for the occasion, and for a moment he stood the impersonation of resolute defiance. After a brief consultation, Peters approached the major, remarking—

"Jones proposes, major, that as one shot has passed between you without effect, and as he is satisfied——"

"So am I," interrupted the major—"I'm perfectly willing——"

"But hear me out, major. He says he's satisfied that the distance is too great, and proposes to reduce it one-half."

"I'll see him d—d first!" exclaimed the disappointed major, all his feathers and his hopes fall-

ing at once. "The bloody-minded devil wants to git my head in the muzzle of his pistol."

The pistols were again loaded, and the parties took their respective positions. All the major's trepidation had returned. As he took the pistol in his trembling hand, he stared wildly into the face of his second, muttering in a low, husky voice:

"Farewell, Peters—I'm a case."

"Tut, tut, major, keep a stiff upper lip, and you'll bring him this time."

On the next fire, Jones fell to the ground with a deep groan! There was a rush to the spot—his breast was covered with blood!

"Oh, my God!" exclaimed Bangs, "I've killed him! Run, Peters, and call all the doctors in town! —run, for Heaven's sake, run! Oh, my Lord, what have I done! The devil will get my soul for this! —I told 'em I was a dead shot.—Why didn't somebody stop the duel?" And away he dashed into town, as fast as he could run, exclaiming—"I've killed him!—I've killed him!—I told 'em I was a dead shot!"

An odd specimen of human nature was Major Ferguson Bangs. A Virginian by birth, he had, some years previous to the date of our sketch, found his way to Georgia in the capacity of a negro trader, and settled near Pineville. The major was a successful planter, but, though he possessed many broad acres, and joined fences with several wealthy neighbours, he had failed in all his attempts to join hearts

and hands with some one of their lovely daughters; a circumstance to which some were disposed to attribute certain eccentricities of character in which he was at times wont to indulge. When sober, there was not a more sensible or better disposed person to be found than the proud Virginia major; but with him the old adage which says—"When wine is in, wit is out," was most strikingly verified. Under the influence of liquor he became a very fool, and, strange as it may seem, sought, on all such occasions, to sustain the character—for which of all others he was least qualified—of a fighting man. He was tall, athletic, and masculine in features, with a haughty curling lip; but with all these attributes of a bully, fight was not in his nature; nor could all the stimulus his system was able to bear infuse sufficient of the combative principle within him to render him a hero. The major was singularly conscientious, and, perhaps, his greatest weakness was a firm belief in the supernatural. Drunk or sober he lived in dread of ghosts and apparitions, and those who knew him best were of opinion that, coward as he was, he feared man less than he did the devil.

The reader has already come to the conclusion that the duel was a sham affair, and that the pistols were loaded with powder only. Such was the fact, though Major Bangs, important as was the part sustained by him in the performance, had been left entirely ignorant of the trick, and while the balance of the *dramatis personæ* were enjoying the farce they enacted, he was "doing" tragedy in good earnest.

Poor major! not only had he experienced what it is to be shot at and missed, but now he felt the mark of Cain as indelibly fixed upon his brow as if it had been branded there with a piece of red-hot brimstone, by the very old gentleman himself. He had honourable friends, too, who stuck by him, determined to make the most of the occasion. They drank his health at his own expense, and bragged of his prowess, by which means they managed to keep his imagination up to fever heat, during the balance of the day. Indeed, between the influence of liquor and the pathetic accounts which they related to him of Jones's dying agonies, he had become, towards evening, almost frantic.

About dark, a message was brought to him from Jones. It was an urgent request that he would visit him before he died, and receive from him his pardon and forgiveness.

"No, no, gentlemen; I cannot bear to look at the man I have murdered!" exclaimed the major.

"But, he says he aint got but a few minutes to live, no how, and he wants you to come and see him, so he wont die with no grudge agin anybody," said one.

"Did he say so, boys?"

"Yes, major, and you better go and make it up with him, and then you'll be apt to sleep better, you know."

"Sleep!" exclaimed the major, glaring his eyes wildly open, with a vacant stare—"sleep!—no, these eyes will never sleep again, sir—these eyes——"

"Oh, pshaw, major, come along and don't snap 'em so."

"Yes, come, major," said his second, who joined to persuade him.

"Is that you, Peters? Will you stand by Major Bangs, Peters? Well, come, boys—but I'd rather see the devil. Does he look bad, boys? for I can't look at him if he does."

"Oh, no, he looks pretty well, considerin' he's got a ounce ball right through his guzzler vein——"

"That all comes of being a line shot," interrupted the major, with an involuntary shudder.

"But you must shake hands and make it all up with him before he dies, and then you'll feel better. Besides, major, you know you killed him in an honourable way."

"D—n the honourable way!—it all counts the same—and the devil will make a blizzard of my soul for it."

Taking the arms of two of the company, the major walked over to the "long room" to take a parting look at his unfortunate antagonist. Jones lay in a bed with his head bolstered up until he sat almost erect. His face was well smeared with flour, and bloody cloths were profusely scattered about the room. As the major came quaking to the door, it was flung wide open, and the ghastly spectacle burst suddenly upon him. Shivering with horror, he shrunk back aghast, and with mouth distended and eyeballs starting from their inflamed sockets, stood for a moment as if transfixed to the spot, while large drops of perspiration started to his brow. His foot was braced against the threshold, and all the force that could be applied to his broad shoul-

ders was not sufficient to urge him into the room. At length Jones beckoned him feebly with his hand. The major flinched. Jones said in a low voice—

"I'm—ah, oh!—I'm gwine, major!—ah, to—oh!—oh-o-o-o!——".

"Let me go, boys!" shouted Bangs—"let me go!" and with one desperate effort he shook them off, and fled from the house. Had he remained a moment longer, he would have discovered the trick that had been put upon him; for Jones, unable longer to restrain his mirth, sprang from the bed and joined in the laugh.

It had now grown late, and Major Bangs was permitted to seek his lodgings without further interruption. His room was upon the ground floor of an out-house belonging to the hotel—in it there were several beds, but on this occasion he chanced to be the only tenant. Filled with horrible imaginings and gloomy fears, he sought his bed. He was in no mood to be over nice, and as his boots obstinately refused to be drawn, he allowed them to remain—his hat and stock, being articles of minor importance, were also permitted to occupy their respective places. Thus half undressed, he threw himself upon his bed, and endeavoured to find in the arms of Morpheus a refuge from the upbraidings of a guilty conscience. But

"Instead of poppies, willows
Waved o'er his couch."

The horrid spectacle of the dying Jones was constantly before him, and when he closed his eyes to

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"The demon approached, and placing his cloven foot upon the bedside, looked over and gazed down upon him with his eyes of fire."

shut out the fearful vision, horned devils with long fiery tails danced and frisked around him, with red-hot tridents in their claws, as if ready to pitch him into that unknown country, of which, in his youth, he had been taught to entertain a very unfavourable opinion. It commenced to rain, but the pattering upon the roof was no opiate to him, and the lightning only afforded him horrid glimpses of demons and devils as they skulked into the corners of the room. The storm became more violent—the lightning blazed in upon his face, and the thunder shook the foundations of the old building, while a rumbling sound seemed to come up from the bowels of the earth, as if it were about to open to receive him. He heard the tramp of feet in his room, and

"He felt his hair
Twine like a knot of snakes around his face,"

as he beheld, by the fitful glare of the lightning, the old king devil of all approaching his bed. He would have prayed, shouted, fled, any thing, but his very soul was frozen within him, and he sank powerless upon his pillow. The demon approached, and, placing his cloven foot upon the bed-side, leaned over and gazed down upon him with his eyes of fire. The major's lips moved, but he had not breath for a word—he smelt the brimstone and saw the demon's horns. He remembered his grandmother's charm for evil spirits—and he *thought* "in the name of the Lord, what do you want of me?" but the demon only shook its head. In the desperate extremity of his fear the major grasped forward with both

hands. By chance he seized the horns—the next moment he was upon the floor struggling with his satanic visiter—a moment after, he was fleeing through the street, shouting and screaming, on his way to the tavern.

Some five or six village gossips were seated round the bar-room fire, when Major Bangs made his *entrée* in the eccentric costume we have described.

"Why, what upon yeath's the matter with the major?" exclaimed uncle Hearty, rising from his seat.

The major shook in every joint—his teeth rattled and his eyes glared wildly about the room.

"Why, major, what under heavens ails you?" inquired two or three in the same breath.

"I'm right from h—ll!" gasped the major. "I had him by the horns!—I told 'em it would be so—keep him off, wont you, gentlemen—where's Peters?"

"Pore feller!" remarked uncle Hearty—"he's lost his senses. The boys has been projectin' with him agin."

He was wet and cold, and it was quite evident that his physical strength was fast sinking under the terrible excitement of his mind. Humanity suggested that something should be done to check the raging fever of his brain, or dangerous consequences might ensue. Accordingly, he was conducted to a bed and his comfort carefully provided for.

About noon on the following day the major made his appearance in the bar-room, and desired to see

the landlord. His face was haggard and pale, his eyes blood-shotten and heavy, and his countenance still bore the traces of the dreadful fright he had experienced. He seemed to have a confused recollection of the incidents of the past day, but on no subject was his memory clear and distinct, except in reference to his encounter with the devil. That circumstance had made an indelible impression on his mind, which his friends found great difficulty in removing—nor is he to this day clearly satisfied that there was not some infernal agency in the matter.

He was duly informed of all the particulars of the duel—how he had been drunk, insulting everybody he met, and how that a few mischievous fellows had made him the hero of a sham duel.

"But, captain," said he, "the devil?—I saw him, sir, last night, as sure as I stand here, sir."

"You saw my old Billy-goat," replied the landlord. "You went to bed in the 'long room,' and left both doors open, and when the rain came on, Billy sought shelter in your apartment."

"Oh, but I smelled the brimstone, sir, as plain as could be."

"You smelled Billy's beard, major, which is quite high flavoured, and might be taken for brimstone by a man who would go to bed in his hat and boots."

"Then you think it really was him I had the tussle with, eh?"

"To be sure it was—he is the only horned gentleman on my premises, I trust."

"Well," replied the major, after a moment's reflection, "I've made a pretty considerable fool of

myself, sir, that's a fact. Have my horse brought out, sir, and if ever you catch Major Ferguson Bangs in another such scrape; sir, may the devil get him sure enough, sir."

Major Bangs did not show himself in Pineville for a long time after this event, and when he did visit town again, he had but one quarrel, and that was with the first man who asked him to drink. He was never known to be drunk after the day of THE DUEL.

THE FIRE-HUNT.

Samuel Sikes was one of the most inveterate hunters I ever knew. He delighted in no other pursuit or pastime, and though he pretended to cultivate a small spot of ground, yet so large a portion of his time was spent in the pursuit of game, that his agricultural interests suffered much for the want of proper attention. He lived a few miles from town, and as you passed his house, which stood a short distance from the main road, a few acres of corn and a small patch of potatoes might probably attract your notice as standing greatly in need of the hoe; but the most prominent objects about Sam's domicile pertained to his favourite pursuit. A huge pair of antlers—a trophy of one of his proudest achievements—occupied a conspicuous place on the gable end; some ten or a dozen tall fishing-poles, though modestly stowed behind the chimney, projected far above the roof of the little cabin, and upon its unchinked walls many a 'coon and deer-skin were undergoing the process of drying. If all these did not convince you that the proprietor was a sportsman, the varied and clamorous music of a score of hungry-looking hounds, as they issued forth in full cry at every passer-by, could not fail to force the conviction.

Sam had early found a companion to share with him his good or ill luck, and though he was yet on the green side of thirty, he was obliged to provide for some five or six little tallow-faced "responsibilities;" so he not only followed the chase from choice but when his wife—who hated "fisherman's luck' *worse* than Sam did a "miss" or a "nibble"—took him to account for spending so many broken days, Saturday afternoons, rainy days and odd hours, to say nothing of whole nights, in the woods, without bringing home so much as a cut-squirrel or horney-head, his ready reply was, that he was "'bleeged" to do the best he could to get meat for her and the "childer."

The Fire-Hunt was Sam's hobby, and though the legislature had recently passed an act prohibiting that mode of hunting, he continued to indulge, as freely as ever, in his favourite sport, resolutely maintaining that the law was "unconstitootional and agin reason." He had often urged me to accompany him, just to see how "slick" he could shine a buck's eyes; and such were the glowing accounts he had from time to time given me of his achievements in that way, that he had drawn from me a promise to go with him "some of these times."

I was sitting one evening, after tea, upon the steps of the porch, enjoying the cool autumnal breeze, when my friend Sam Sikes suddenly made his appearance. He had come for me to go with him on a fire-hunt, and was mounted on his mule Blaze, with his pan upon one shoulder and his musket on the other. Determined to have every thing in readiness before

"Good evenin', major," said he, "I've come out to see if you've a mind to take a little hunt to-night."

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calling on me, he had gone to the kitchen and lit a few light-wood splinters, which were now blazing in his pan, and which served the double purpose of lighting him through the enclosure, and of demonstrating to me the manner of hunting by night. As he approached the house, his light discovered me where I was sitting.

"Good evenin,' major," said he, "I've come out to see if you've a mind to take a little hunt, to-night."

"I believe not, Mr. Sikes," I replied, feeling entirely too well satisfied with my pleasant seat in the cool breeze, to desire to change it for a night-ramble through the woods. "Not to-night, I thank you—it looks like rain."

"Oh, 'shaw, 'taint gwine to rain, no how—and I'm all fixed—come, come along, major."

As he spoke, he rode close to the porch, and his mule made several efforts to crop the shrubbery that grew by the door, which Sam very promptly opposed.

"How far are you going, Mr. Sikes?" I inquired, endeavouring to shake off the lazy fit which inclined me to keep my seat.

"Only jest up the branch a little bit—not beyant a mile from your fence, at the outside. Look at him!" he exclaimed in a louder tone, as he gave the reins a jerk. "Thar's deer a plenty up at the forks, and we'll have r'al sport. Come, you better go, and—— Why, look at him!" giving the reins another jerk at the same time that he sent a kick to his mule's ribs that might have been heard an hun-

dred yards—"and I'll show you how to shine the eyes of a buck."

As he sat in his saddle persuading me to go, his mule kept frisking and turning in such a manner as to annoy him exceedingly. Upon his left shoulder he bore his blazing pan, and upon his right he held his musket, holding the reins also in his right hand; so that any efforts on his part to restrain the refractory movements of his animal was attended with much difficulty. I had about made up my mind to go, when the mule evinced a more resolute determination to get at the shrubbery.

"Whoa! wha, now!—blast your heart—now, look at him!"—then might be heard a few good lusty kicks. "Come, major, git your gun, and let's—— will you hold up yer head, you 'bominable fool?—— and let's take a little round—it'll do you good."

"As I only go to satisfy my curiosity, I'll not take a gun. You will be able to shoot all the deer we meet."

"Well, any way you mind, major."

We were about to start, when suddenly the mule gave a loud bray, and when I turned to look, his heels were high in the air, and Sam clinging to his neck, while the fire flew in every direction. The mule wheeled, reared and kicked, and still Sam hung to his neck, shouting—"Look at him!—whoa!—will you mind!—whoa!—whoa, now!"—but all to no purpose, until at length the infuriated animal backed to the low paling fence which enclosed a small flower-garden, over which he tumbled—Sam, pan, gun and all, together!

When Sam had disengaged himself, he discovered that the saddle-blanket was on fire, which had been the cause of the disaster.

"Cus the luck," said he, "I thought I smelt something burnin'." Then addressing himself to the mule in a louder tone, he continued—"That's what comes o' jerkin' yer dratted head about that-a-way. Blast your infernal heart, you've spilt all my fixins—and here's my pan, jest as crooked as a fish-hook!"—then there was a kick or two and a blow with the frying-pan—"take that, you bowdacious fool, and hold yer head still next time, will you? And you've skinned my leg all to flinders, dadfetch your everlastin' picter to dingnation!—take that under your short ribs, now, will you—whoa! I've a great mind to blow yer infernal brains out this very night! And you've broke the major's palings down, you unnatural cus. Whoa! step over now, if you's satisfied."

By this time Sam had got the mule out of the enclosure, and had gathered up most of his "fixins." The whole scene, after the upsetting of the pan, had transpired in the dark, but from the moment I saw the mule's heels flying and Sam clinging to his neck, it was with the utmost difficulty I restrained my laughter. During his solo in the enclosure I was absolutely compelled to stuff my handkerchief in my mouth to prevent his hearing me.

"Did you ever *see* the likes o' that, major?" exclaimed Sam, as I approached the spot where he was engaged in readjusting his saddle and putting other matters to rights that had been deranged by

the struggles of the mule to free himself from the burning blanket.

"I am very sorry it happened," I replied, "as it will prevent us from taking our hunt."

"No, I'll be dadfetcht if it does, tho'—I aint to be backed out that-a-way, major, not by no means. You know 'a bad beginnin' makes a good endin',' as the old woman said. He isn't done sich a monstrous sight o' harm, nohow,—only bent the handle of my pan a little, and raked some skin off one o' my shins—but that's neither here nor thar. So if you'll jest hold Blaze till I go and git a torch, we'll have a shoot at a pair o' eyes yit, to-night."

I took the bridle while Sam procured a torch, and after he had gathered up the fagots which he had brought to burn in his pan, we set off for the branch—Sam upon his mule, with a torch in one hand, while I walked by his side.

It was only necessary for us to go a short distance before we were at the designated spot.

"Thar," said Sam, as he dismounted, "here's as good a place as any—so I'll jest hitch Blaze here, and light our pan."

Accordingly Blaze was made fast to a stout sapling, and Sam proceeded to kindle a fire in his pan, at the same time explaining to me, in a low voice, the *modus operandi* of the Fire-Hunt, which he accompanied with sundry precautionary hints and directions for my own especial observance on the present occasion.

"Now, major," said he, "you must keep close to me, and you mustn't make no racket in the

bushes. You see, the way we does to shine the deer's eyes is this—we holds the pan so, on the left shoulder, and carries the gun at a trail in the right hand. Well, when I wants to look for eyes, I turns round slow, and looks right at the edge of my shadder, what's made by the light behind me in the pan, and if ther's a deer in gun-shot of me, his eyes 'll shine 'zactly like two balls of fire."

This explanation was as clear as Sam could make it, short of a demonstration, for which purpose we now moved on through the woods. After proceeding a few hundred yards, Sam took a survey as described, but saw no eyes.

"Never mind, major," said he, "we'll find 'em —you see."

We moved on cautiously, and Sam made his observations as before, but with no better success. Thus we travelled on in silence, from place to place, until I began to get weary of the sport.

"Well, Mr. Sikes," I remarked, "I don't see that your bad beginning to-night is likely to insure any better ending."

"Oh, don't git out of patience, major—you'll see."

We moved on again. I had become quite weary, and fell some distance behind. Sam stopped, and when I came up, he said in a low voice—"you better keep pretty close up, major, 'case if I should happen to shine your eyes, you see, I moughtn't know 'em from a deer, and old Betsey here toats fifteen buckshot and a ball, and slings 'em to kill.'

I fell behind no more.

We had wandered about for several hours, and the sky which had not been the clearest in the commencement, now began to assume the appearance of rain. I had more than once suggested the propriety of going home—but Sam was eager to show me how to shine the eyes of a buck, and no argument or persuasion could win him from his purpose. We searched on as before, for another half hour, and I was about to express my determination to go home, when Sam suddenly paused—

"Stop, stop," said he, "thar's eyes, and whappers they is too—now hold still, major."

I raised on tiptoe with eager anticipation—I heard the click of the lock—there was a moment of portentous silence—then the old musket blazed forth with a thundering report, and in the same instant was heard a loud squeal, and a noise like the snapping of bridle reins.

"Thunder and lightnin'!" exclaimed Sam, as he dropped gun, pan and all, and stood fixed to the spot—"I've shot old Blaze!"

So soon as he had recovered from the shock, we hastened to the spot, and, sure enough, there lay the luckless mule, still floundering in the agonies of death. The aim had been but too good, and poor Blaze was hurt "past all surgery." Sam stood over him in silent agony, and, notwithstanding the bitter maledictions he had so recently heaped upon him, now that he saw the poor animal stretched upon the ground in death, and knew that his "infernal picter" would greet him no more for ever, a flood of tender recollections of past services poured

over his repentant heart. He uttered not a word until after the last signs of life were extinct—then, with a heavy sigh, he muttered—

"Pore old cretur!—well, well, I reckon I's done the business now, sure enough. That's what I calls a *pretty* night's work, anyhow!"

"A 'bad beginning doesn't always make a good ending,' Mr. Sikes," I remarked.

"Cus the luck, it will run so, sometimes," said he in a sullen tone, as he commenced taking the saddle off his deceased donkey. "I'm blamed if I see how I got so turned round."

By this time it had commenced to rain, and we were anxious to get home; but Sam had dropped his gun and pan, as the awful truth rushed upon him, that he had killed the only mule he possessed in the world, and we now found it difficult to recover them. After searching about for near half an hour in the drizzling rain, Sam chanced to come upon the spot from which he had taken the hapless aim, and having regained his gun and pan, we endeavoured to strike a fire; all our efforts, however, to produce a light, proved ineffectual, and we essayed to grope our way amid the darkness.

"Hello, major, whar is you?"

"Here!"

"Whar you gwine?"

'Home."

"Well, that aint the way."

"Why, we came this way."

"No, I reckon not."

"I'm sure we didn't come that way."

"Whar, in the devil's name, is the branch?" petulantly inquired Sam. "If I could only see the branch, I could soon find the way."

"It must be down this way," I replied.

"Somehow or other I'm tetotiatiously deluded, to-night," remarked Sam, as he came tearing through the briers with his stirrup-irons dangling about him, his gun in one hand and frying-pan in the other. "If I hadn't a been completely dumfoozled, I'd never a killed Blaze like I did."

I volunteered to carry his gun, but he was in no humour for the interchange of civilities—"still harping" on his mule, he trudged on, grumbling to himself—

"What," he muttered, "will Polly say now—I'll never hear the last of that critter the longest day I live. That's worse than choppin' the coon-tree across the sittin' hen's nest, and I liked never to hearn the eend o' that."

After groping through the brush and briers, which seemed to grow thicker the farther we proceeded, for some time, Sam stopped—

"I swar, major, this aint the way."

"Well, then, lead the way, and I'll follow you," I replied, beginning, myself, to think I was wrong.

Changing our direction, we plodded on, occasionally tumbling over logs and brush, until Sam concluded that all our efforts to find the way were useless.

"Oh, thunderation!" said he, as he tore away from a thick jungle of briers in which he had been rearing and pitching for more than a minute, "it

aint no manner of use for us to try to find the way, major—so let's look out a big tree, and stop under it till morning."

Seeing no alternative, I reluctantly acceded to his proposal.

Accordingly, we nestled down under the shelter of a large oak. For a time neither spoke, and all was still, save the incessant buz of the countless hosts of musketoes that now seemed intent upon devouring us. At length I broke silence, by remarking—at the same time that I gave myself a box upon the ear, intended for the musketoe that was biting me—

"I think this will be my last fire-hunt, Mr. Sikes."

"The fact is," replied Sam, "this 'ere aint very incouragin' to new beginners, major, that's a fact—but you musn't give it up so. I hope we'll have a better showin' next time."

"My curiosity is satisfied," I remarked. "I wouldn't pass such another night in the woods for all the deer in Georgia."

"'Shaw, I wouldn't care a tinker's cus," said Sam, "if I only jest hadn't a killed Blaze. That's what sets me back, monstrous."

"That was indeed an unlucky mistake. I should think a few such exploits as that would cure you of your fire-hunting propensity. But I expect you never had such luck, before to-night."

"No, not 'zactly—tho' I've had some monstrous bad luck in my time, too. I reckon you never hearn about the time I got among the panters."

"No—how was that?"

"Why, it was 'bout this time last fall, I and Dudley went out and 'camped on Sperit Creek. Well, he tuck his pan and went out one way, and I went another. I went shinin' along jest like you seed me to-night, till I got a good bit from the camp, and bimeby, shore enough, I sees eyes not more'n forty yards off. I fotched old Betsey up to my face and cut loose, and the deer drapped right in his tracks, but somehow in my hurryment I drapt my pan, jest like I did to-night when I heard old Blaze squeel. While I was tryin' to kindle up a light, what should I see but more eyes shinin' way down in the holler. I drapt the fire and loaded up old Betsey as quick as I could, to be ready for the varmint, whatever it was. Well, the eyes kep comin' closer and closer, and gettin' bigger and brighter, and the fust thing I know'd ther was a whole grist of 'em all follerin' right after the fust ones, and dodgin' up and down in the dark like they was so many dancin' devils. Well, I begun to feel sort o' jubous of 'em, so I raised old Betsey and pulled at the nearest eyes, but she snapped—I primed her agin, and she flashed—and when I flashed, sich an other squallin' and yellin' you never did hear, and up the trees they went all round me. Thinks I them must be somethin' unnatural, bein' as my gun wouldn't shoot at 'em—so I jest drapt old Betsey, and put out for the camp as hard as I could split. Well, we went back the next mornin', and what do you think them infernal critters had done?—eat the deer up slick and clean, all but the bones and horns, and a little ways off lay old Betsey, with four finger

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"As we stepped from the wood into the open road, I contemplated for a moment the latter as appearance of my unfortunate companion."

of buck-shot and bullets, but not a bit of powder in her. Then I know'd they was panters."

"Why, they might have eaten you too."

"That's a fact. Dudley said he wondered they didn't take hold of me."

The drizzling shower which had already nearly wet us to the skin, now turned to a drenching storm, which continued for more than an hour without intermission. When the storm abated, we discovered the dawn approaching, and, shortly after, were enabled to ascertain our whereabouts. We were not more than five hundred yards from the clearing, and probably had not been, during the night, at a greater distance than a mile from the house which we had left in the evening.

As we stepped from the wood into the open road, I contemplated, for a moment, the ludicrous appearance of my unfortunate companion. Poor Sam!—daylight, and the prospect of home, brought no joy to him—and as he stood before me, with the saddle and bridle of the deceased Blaze girded about his neck, his musket in one hand, and pan in the other, drenched with rain, his clothes torn, and a countenance that told of the painful conflict within, I could not but regard him as an object of sympathy rather than ridicule.

"Well," said he, with a heavy sigh, and without looking me in the face—"good mornin', major."

"Good morning," I replied, touched with sympathy for his misfortune, and reproaching myself for the mirth I had enjoyed at his expense—"Good

morning, Mr. Sikes, I am very sorry for your loss, and hope you will have better luck in future."

"Oh, major," said he, "it aint the vally of the mule that I minds so much—though old Blaze was a monstrous handy cretur on the place. But thar's my wife—what 'll she say when she sees me comin' home in this here fix? Howsomedever, what can't be cured must be indured, as the feller said when the monkey bit him."

"That's the true philosophy," I remarked, seeing that he endeavoured to take courage from the train of reasoning into which he had fallen; "and Mrs. Sikes should bear in mind that accidents *will* happen, and be thankful that it's no worse."

"To be sure she ought," replied Sam, "but that aint the way with her—she don't believe in accidents, nohow; and then she's so bowdacious unreasonable when she's raised. But, she better not," he continued, with a stern look as he spoke—"she better not come a cavortin' 'bout me with any of her rantankerous carryin's on this mornin', for I aint in no humour nohow!" and he made a threatening gesture with his head, as much as to say he'd make the fur fly if she did.

We parted at the gate, Sam for his home, and I for my bed—he sorely convinced that "a bad beginning" does not *always* "make a good ending," and I fully resolved that it should be my first and last FIRE-HUNT.

THE ANTI-RAIL-RODE MAN.

THE time was when Judge Lynch exercised a broad jurisdiction in and about the vicinity of Pineville. His court claimed to be a "*Court of Iniquity*," and took cognisance of, and punished all those little delinquencies not "otherwise provided for by law," and no informality or lack of proof positive screened the culprit from the infliction of his summary mode of punishment. The public constituted the judge's grand jury, and just so sure as an individual, by any indiscretion or impropriety of conduct, rendered himself obnoxious to the community, just so certain was he compelled to undergo the sentence of the "*Court of Iniquity*," without benefit of clergy.

We have forgotten who was the first *rail-rode* man in Pineville, though we well recollect that not a few passengers were conveyed out of the corporate limits of the town, on a single *rail*, that being the punishment in ordinary cases. We have not, however, forgotten the first time that the judge's sentence was successfully resisted and his power set at defiance.

John Borum was given to drink, and when under the influence of liquor was a very turbulent, desperate, dare-devil sort of a fellow. On that day, John

had indulged to excess, and had got into numerous quarrels, in one of which he fired a horse-pistol on a small boy, who returned the compliment by peppering him with a full charge of shot from a fowling-piece. The distance between the parties prevented any serious damage being done, and but for the great disproportion in the size and age of the antagonists, the duel between John Borum and the blacksmith's son would have passed off without notice. It soon became a town talk, however, and as John went staggering through the streets, swearing vengeance and exhibiting his wounds—his right arm and hand having received several of the shot—his conduct tended much to increase the excitement against him. Judge Lynch was not slow to make a decision in the case, and, before dark, it was currently given out that John Borum was to be ridden on a rail that night.

Now, of all other men, perhaps, John Borum had the greatest aversion to "sittin' on a rail." He would rather have died than suffer such an indignity; and, immediately on receiving the intelligence, he resolved that they should not catch him "sleepin' berry sound." He took another large drink, and, after clearing his throat, exclaimed in a whining tone of voice—

"Ride me on a rail!—why I'll be dadfetcht if I'd be rid on a rail not for five thousand dollars!"

"Well, you'd better put out, then," said the gentleman of the *bar*, as he set back the bottle and dropped the thrip into the drawer. "Judge Lynch has said it."

"Well, now, I'm not a gwine to be sarved no such trick," said John. "Judge Lynch be d—d!"

John sauntered out, sniveling and muttering to himself—"I'll blow 'em all to everlastin' thunderation, if they come a projectin' about me!"

He then stepped into Mr. Harley's and purchased three pounds of powder, which he tied up in a silk pocket-handkerchief. As it grew towards dark, John, with his handkerchief under his arm, walked into a confectionary and grocery establishment kept by a quiet old Frenchman, where he purchased a few cigars, and, lighting one of them, commenced smoking. Already the officers of the high "Court of Iniquity" were in pursuit of him, and as he saw them gather round the door, he began to puff away at his cigar, and mutter curses against "the whole infernal pack of 'em."

"Yes," said he, "you come tryin' that 'ere, and you'll git waked up worse than you ever was afore—drat your infernal picters. You jest fool with this child—that's all—and if I don't blow you to kingdom come—you see if I don't!"

The crowd which had assembled round the door, now gradually entered the room, and as they did so, John flourished his cigar, and cried out—

"Jest you tetch, now! If you lay your hands on me, I'll send you whirlin', if this here powder's good for any thing. I don't care a cus for myself, nohow, for I'd ryther be blowed through the roof of this here store twenty times, than be rid on a rail once,—a confounded sight."

This last speech attracted the attention of Monsieur Crapeau, who began to cast very uneasy glances at John's wallet—

"Ha, what dat you shall say, sare?—blow off de roof from my house?"

"Lay hold of him," said the judge, who generally attended the execution of his sentences in person—"lay hold of him, boys!"

"Stand off! stand off!" exclaimed John at the top of his voice, holding up the powder in one hand and the cigar in the other—"Do you see this 'ere cigar, and this 'ere powder?—Well, jest you lay your fingers on me, and I'll tetch 'em together quicker'n lightnin'—If I don't now, dad burn me!"

"Mon Dieu! Mon Dieu!" exclaimed the Frenchman—"Go out of my house, sare!—begone before one little minute—what, le diable! will you blow all up my properte?"

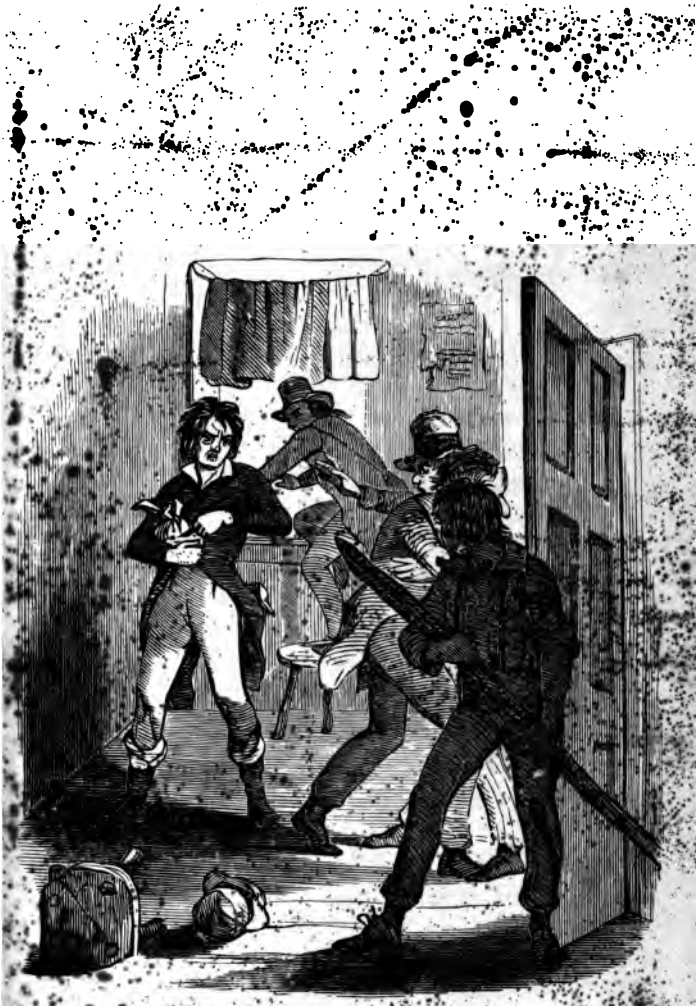
"Well, let 'em let me alone, then. I'll blow all hands up, and myself too, before I'll be rid on a rail!"

"Gather him up, boys," said the judge; "the sentence of the law must be executed!"

The crowd, which had now greatly increased in number, gradually drew round the besieged Borum, and the end of the rail was seen entering the door.

"Here goes, then!" exclaimed John, drawing the cigar from his mouth and applying it close to the handkerchief.

There was a sudden rush to the door, and a confusion of voices crying out—"Stop! stop!—don't!



"Here goes, then!" exclaimed John, drawing the cigar from his mouth and applying it close to the handkerchief."

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don't!"—above all of which might be heard the old Frenchman, crying—"Murdare! murdare!"

"Well," said John, as the crowd dispersed, "I'd jest as lieve be blowed into everlastin' shoestrings as be rid on a rail!"

"I tell you one, two, several time, begone vid your pordare—if you shall blow me up, I shall have you hang, if you no begone from my house. Sacre! devilment!"

But Borum could neither be persuaded nor driven from his position against the wall, until the old man had persuaded the Lynch party to withdraw to some distance from his door. He then left the house, much to the relief of Monsieur Crapeau—but ever as the crowd approached he would prepare to apply the match. At one time they approached with more than usual determination, and, when they had got quite near, one was heard to say—"Bring the rail!"

"You try it, now!" said John, "and if you don't git yourselves into a hornet's nest, it'll be because fire wont burn powder—now mind!"

The circle began cautiously to close around him, but as he knocked the ashes from his cigar, at the same time producing a few sparks, preparatory to touching it to the powder, he was again suddenly left alone. The individual who had fatigued himself considerably by carrying the rail, in his sudden retreat dashed it to the ground, and, exclaiming—"*Non comatible in statu blowupibus!*" abandoned the attempt. The balance of the *posse* soon imitated his example, leaving John Borum triumphant.

Thus Judge Lynch, for the first time, witnessed the utmost contempt for his authority, and the successful defiance of his power. John Borum occasionally got into difficulties afterwards, but *never was ridden upon a rail!*

THE END.

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